

# THE SATURDAY REVIEW

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## Notes of the Week

If everyone could have been induced—or compelled—to join a conspiracy of silence, how much better for the chances of Ottawa! Instead of which, so to speak, all the professional pundits have burst into tears or rage or joy, as their own whim or their employers' interests seemed to dictate. We have been warned that the Conference is already on the rocks and that the British delegation is (a) hopelessly divided or (b) hopelessly antagonistic to every Dominion desire. We have been told that all is going splendidly and that the main details of a complete scheme of Imperial economic reconstruction are lacking.

All these things cannot be true. Probably none of them are true. They do not sound more feasible than a three column tariff in which the Dominions get no more than the treatment due to a most favoured nation. Obviously nothing vital in either direction has happened as yet. The more the Conference is left alone, the better for the Empire.

On one point it is, however, permissible to comment—the treatment of Russia. For the issue of an embargo on imports from Russia has evidently been raised. Here it is easier to understand the hesitations of the British delegation than to admit their force. So far as the credits go, he would indeed be credulous who believed that any such obligations will not be repudiated by the Soviets. So far as individual trading is concerned the general advantage may be held to outweigh the individual hardship, while it has long been clear that any such trading was carried on at what a garage calls the customer's own risk.

Why, after all, should we trade with Russia or continue diplomatic relations? The Soviets are our avowed and implacable enemy. They foment trouble and injure trade in every part of our Empire; they exist on stolen goods, assassination, and terrorism; they invade our markets with the products of forced labour employed in factories erected with the money we have lent them; they mock our God and re-crucify our Christ. Is there, under God and man, any reason

### Our Bitterest Foe

### Pray Silence, Gentlemen

for having any dealings with them? Are there not a thousand reasons for considering such dealings shameful and stupid?

Now come the Dominions to ask for an embargo on Russian imports, to point out the unfavourable balance (even on paper) of our trade with Russia as opposed to our Dominion opportunities. And the British delegation has every air of hesitation.

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International comity has its charms. It has its dangers too, and seldom are they better exemplified than by the minor bomb that exploded last week-end at Geneva. There exists a foolish affair called the "Interparliamentary Union"—foolish, because parliaments are essentially national institutions and cannot function otherwise than individually—that holds an annual congress. This year the Union borrowed for its congress premises belonging to the League of Nations. Here then did M. Renaudel, the largest-bodied, largest-faced, and largest-voiced French Socialist, utter words that the Italian delegation took as an insult. "The Fascist delegate," M. Renaudel is reported as crying, "has invoked the name of justice. There is no justice where there is no liberty and no control by public opinion." On countercries bursting from the Italian benches, he improved matters by shouting: "I accept no lessons from representatives of the régime that assassinated Matteotti."

### The Helpful Touch

The storm could not be appeased. Recrimination succeeded recrimination. The Italians, unable to obtain an apology, have resigned from the Interparliamentary Union. The Union itself has been banished from the precincts of the League of Nations. Thus do rash attempts at improving relations between countries end only in their exacerbation.

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The answer of Bavaria to the Junker-cum-Hitler move in Prussia has been no less definite than quick. An army of 100,000 men has been constituted under the name of a "National Defence Force" to back up the Bavarian police in action against any elements of disorder, whether Communist or Hitlerite. The prediction lately made in these columns that Bavaria could take care of herself would appear to be on the road to justification.

### New Art at Munich

Englishmen who served at the front will not have forgotten the reputation of the Bavarians as being among the hardest of their foes. Were there not cases of the easier-going Saxons, on the most friendly-enemy terms across No Man's Land, displaying notices: "Look out. A Bavarian regiment is replacing us to-morrow." Prussians, too, know well the sterling character of men from the peasant State of the South. Before the war

thousands of English visitors used to indulge in "Swärmerei" for the New Art of Munich. This is Munich's latest form of it, and one that must compel the admiration of all lovers of liberty.

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Italy's last minute defection from the ranks of Signatories to the preliminary Disarmament resolution at Geneva delayed, without crippling, its adoption by a large majority. The size of the majority, unfortunately, signifies nothing: almost all nations, as well as individuals, will sign amiable statements in which they are not vitally interested. Of far deeper import is the character of the opposition and the abstainers: they include Germany, Soviet Russia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Italy—in a word, the chief powers that desire to upset European order as established twelve years ago.

The Soviets refuse to sign except upon terms that would leave their hands free and tie other peoples'; Germany insists on an equality of armaments that would allow her to take the offensive, and threatens otherwise not to put in further appearance at the Conference; and her former allies, now much weakened but not to be despised as homes of fighting men, follow suit. The reasons for Italy's appearance in the same camp are more complex.

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Italy, in the first place, suffers from a Serbian complex. The kingdom of Yugoslavia seems to threaten Italian mastery of the Adriatic, Rome's *mare nostrum*: wherefore Italy has laid skilful hands upon the Serbian neighbour, Albania. Then she longs for further rights in Tunisia as an outlet for surplus population and will not be content with what France offers; she yearns for naval equality with the latter country; she is ruffled by the rejection of her recent hopes at Lausanne for the cancellation of interallied debts as well as reparations; finally she does not hold with restrictions on aerial bombardment, one of her longest military suits. Therefore Italy has long flirted with Hungary and Bulgaria and now disengages herself from her former allies, to side with her former enemies.

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At the moment this matters little, for the resolution signed by 41 States sets forth but pious aspiration. But things will be different next year when it comes to taking practical steps. How many fair resolutions were not voted at the Hague Peace Conference, only to fizzle out later in the flatness of non-ratification? For effective measures will have first to be voted, then ratified.

### This Year, Next Year—

The adhesion of France, moreover, is not all that it sounds. M. Herriot gave his country's vote on the following conditions expressed in a reasoned document: no disarmament without security being organised internationally, no discussion until then of Germany's demand for equality of armaments, a system of sanctions to be attached to the Kellogg Pact, international control of civilian aviation for which France will propose a scheme, the refusal of the title of "belligerent" to any nation aggressor against another. In the present state of things one might as well ask for the moon. Yet no visible successor of M. Herriot is like to be less stiff.

The course of true love never did run true, we know. But its deviations are as nothing compared to what Disarmament curves and twists bid fair to prove next year.

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This is the moment that General von Schleicher, the German Minister of Defense, has chosen to broadcast *urbi et orbi* his country's demand for equality in armament in terms of studied rudeness.

#### The Reichswehr View

Indeed, this is nothing new. General von Schleicher's charge of hypocrisy against France, and his sneer at Stresemann," to whom one could scarcely attribute any bias against the land of his negotiating partner, Briand," belong to the stock-in-trade of German Nationalist eloquence. These gentry are singularly ungrateful to Stresemann, who successfully beguiled Briand, and many others with him, into the belief that German amity could be purchased by concession, whereas his posthumous memoirs show that he was pursuing the same aim as his present detractors, though with greater caution.

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Before this week-end is over the Davis Cup will have been won and lost, by France who has held it for five years, or by the United States who did the trick for seven.

#### The Cup

The defeat of the Germans last week was most honourable to them. It is a curious thing to see Von Cramm, the typical blond Teutonic aristocrat—a fine athlete but a shade stiff—side by side with Prenn, of pronounced Jewish features, a symbol of the blend of brains and character that has made modern Germany.

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This pair have done wonders for their country and deserve all our plaudits. To take two singles from the Americans was no mean feat, and demanded greater moral courage than would seem at first sight, since the German players knew that they must lose the doubles, and yet that they had to battle in them and so spend strength sorely needed

for the morrow. Germany has not yet produced a first rate doubles pair; nor did, in the heyday of the gallant Froitzheim. When she does, she will be a match for anyone, for Prenn and Von Cramm are like to prove the leaders of a long line. That they themselves may advance further is very possible. Noted last year as formidable opponents, they have now sprung on to the topmost steps that lead to the throne. Ambition, whetted still keener, will urge them not to stop there.

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Appreciation of our victors' qualities cannot console us for the defeat of Great Britain at Berlin. Our hopes were high when this year opened:

#### Where is England?

where are they now? That Austin has not really recovered from recent ill-health is evident. Despite his one perfect match at Wimbledon, the rapidity of his subsequent despatch at the hands of Vines and his Davis Cup display at Berlin showed that he is not really in form. But Perry is another story. Some maintain that he has grown stale from too much playing, a cause as fatal as want of practice; but judged by his performances in Paris and Wimbledon it seems at least equally probable that he has not developed the strategical talent commensurate with his command of stroke which is necessary to take any man to the highest honours. As in all sports, it is brain at tennis that has the best of brawn.

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It is, we believe, hesitation, not vigour, that loses votes at bye-elections to Conservative candidates as opposed to Liberals or Nationalist against Socialist. North Cornwall was an affair largely private and personal: Wednesbury was a Socialist seat won on a tide of public alarm. Even so, the lesson of these bye-elections is not "Safety First" but "Hit harder." This Government may be forgiven almost anything except feebleness—at home or at Ottawa.

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Most people will be rather astonished to learn of a recommendation made by the Select Committee on Police Forces to the effect that no person without previous police experience should be appointed as Chief Constable. The matter for surprise is that it should have taken a Select Committee to make this great discovery. One would not, for instance, appoint as Field Marshal, a man who was unfitted for such command through lack of training and experience gained by service in lower ranks.

The appointment of Chief Constables varies as between Counties and Boroughs. It is not in-

#### Why Chiefs with No Experience?



frequent to hear of men appointed in the Counties who, though their social credentials may be unquestionable, have little or no experience of police administration. In the Boroughs, though men are often appointed through personal influence, they are usually selected from candidates who have had practical experience.

Strange as it may seem, it is the former, the County Chief Constable, who has the power to appoint or dismiss constables at his pleasure while the Borough man, who usually has had the necessary training for such work, has to defer to the decisions of a Watch Committee. In consequence, there is a distinct social gulf between County and Borough Chief Constables which does not make for harmonious working throughout the force as a whole.

There would be no lack of suitable men fitted for the post of Chief Constable if they were drawn from the Force. Most County Superintendents are perfectly suited to take on the higher command of Chief Constable. Such a step would not only accelerate promotion in the Force, but would also effectively stamp out any parasitic tendency which might develop of appointing, through influence, incompetent men to the higher Police commands.

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The Southern Railway's official statement on its earnings to June 30th closely bears out the exclusive forecast in this column some time back that the current year must see a nett fall of £1,000,000.

#### On the Up Grade

Unless national and international trade appreciably worsens during 1933, which Heaven forbid and even the City begins at last to doubt, this company should be passing its worst. A similar prognostication may apply to the Great Western, a private line in all ways even now. The northern lines of course may be a tougher problem.

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All this talk about dental experiments on dogs has been simply beastly—because the one valid reason for any such experimenting, a solid hope of medical or surgical discovery which might save human life or safeguard human health on a large scale, seemed lacking. Apparently, and wisely, the idea of any such international experiment has been abandoned. But why? Are there not thousands of dentists? Is there any legal or moral bar against the drilling of dentists' teeth, the extraction of nerves, and the filling of the cavities with an infection from human beings? Such, it is reported, was the plan (for dogs) of the International Dental Federation. The dogs, moreover, were to be kept in this state for observation over eighteen months.

#### Dog or Dentist?

After all, let not the experiment be abandoned. It *might* lead to some trivial discovery. Merely substitute dentists for dogs. They can draw lots for the honour of being *corpus vile*. Some would be "seeded" at once.

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A pretty dispute is going on between rival firms of publishers over the respective merits of "Hymns, Ancient and Modern" and "Songs of Praise." Into their respective literary and devotional merits it would be folly to enter rashly. But all the old gibes leave "Hymns, A. and M.," almost intact. Of course, there is, in this traditional collection, much rubbish. There are verses fatuous, illiterate and grotesque; tunes which no normal ear ever wants to hear twice. But the collection is full of good and honoured hymns, and no one is compelled to choose the rubbish.

There remains the question—is it better to sing "You should imitate the names Of St. Andrew and St. James" to a glorious tune or smother "Abide with me" with contrapuntal stupidities and tonal crimes? We shall not answer.

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In Thursday's papers two fatal air crashes were reported; one at great length and in every tragic detail, the other in a few brief lines. And the essential difference between the two was that in one case the pilot only was killed; in the other the pilot and two passengers. It is possible to perceive that the "story" of the Bossom tragedy was the more poignant—chiefly because the newspapers had already printed columns of "news" about young Mr. Bossom's engagement and the private affairs of the Bossom family. But, even with such perception, this juxtaposition and valuation of news illuminates the muddled thinking of democratic journalism.

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#### Cacoethes Loquendi!

The average public school and university man is a walking calamity.—Mr. George Bernard Shaw.

May I, as an "average Public School  
And University man"

(No genius I and not wholly a fool)

Be allowed to reply (if I can

Without being rude, for that's not my desire,  
For I feel to him nothing but amity)

That George Bernard Shaw whom I used to admire  
Is to-day just a *talking* calamity?

W. HODGSON BURNET.



German scientists in Westphalia are making terrific attempts to discover the effect of a bath on the human body. And they are coming across most unexpected difficulties. The first thing they found was that getting into a bath and out again requires exertion which, in turn, accelerates respiration; thus a subsequent measuring of the amount of oxygen, nitrogen and carbonic acid gas in the bathroom would not give an accurate picture of the effects of the bath alone.

The result of all this is that they are having their bathers lifted into the bath and out again by a derrick, and they hope, by analysing the atmosphere in specially constructed bathing cells, to show the action of the water on the nervous system, the heart, and the circulatory system.

The one thing these painstaking gentlemen in Westphalia do not appear to have hit upon is that the real effect of our quaint old English "Saturday night" custom on the body is to make it clean.

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A point that came up in discussion a few days ago raised a question of some social as well as economic importance. It was alleged that since the war the number of small shopkeepers had increased beyond the point at which they were useful, and the suggestion was made that their multiplication was largely responsible for the lag in the fall of retail prices during the past three years.

#### **Small Shopkeepers and Prices**

As to the latter, it is notorious that, whereas wholesale prices have fallen in some commodities by 40 or even 50 per cent., the retail price has only fallen by 10 per cent. The slump has now lasted so long that the small shopkeeper cannot protest that he is working off stock purchased at the top of the market; on the contrary, during the past two or three years, he has prudently bought as nearly from hand to mouth as possible.

No doubt the diminishing purchasing power of the public is beginning to hit him, as it does the big stores. But one does not in fact notice many small shops standing empty for long, and this in itself suggests that, even with falling trade, there is a sufficiently good livelihood to be made out of a small turnover to make it worth while. But in that case the margin of profit between a falling wholesale price and a very much slower fall in retail price must be considerable.

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How many people know that it is necessary for British subjects to have passports in order to travel within the British Empire? **Impediments** Englishmen going to Australia, Australians coming to England, and so on for the

other Dominions, all require these accursed objects which less than twenty years ago were held by the civilised world as emblems of the barbarous conditions prevailing in Russia and Turkey. Now the passport iron has so seared men's souls that enquiry for confirmation on the point, viz., the British Empire's demand of such slave-marks from its own sons, is met at public offices by expressions varying from amazement at the enquirer's ignorance to indignation that anyone could possibly be such a fool as to doubt it. And if your Briton going to Australia or Canada, or vice versa, has no passport? He simply is not allowed to land. The Orient S.S. Co. even affixes this minatory notice to its tickets: "Passengers will be asked to produce their passports on embarkation for inspection, but such examination by the Company must not be accepted as a guarantee of entry into Australia."

Here would seem to be a bit of practical work for Ottawa.

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The delegates for Ottawa are not the only party of Empire pilgrims to have left England. With the great also set sail a part of the British Olympic selection, bound for Los Angeles and eager to uphold the honour of our country in the games. Good men and women were among them and have followed. England's name is in safe hands with Burghley, Powell, and Joyce Cooper in her teams, and Lloyd, our amateur fencing champion, should make a serious showing against all but France or Italy's pick; he is a quick left-hander with a long reach and with luck might even come through into the final pool.

#### **Olympia Bound**

It is to be hoped that better arrangements for the comfort of foreign athletes are being made at Los Angeles than those at the Winter sport section of the Games at Lake Placid, where complaint was rife. It may also be trusted that Americans, safe on their native heath, will not revert to the methods they adopted at London in 1908. Then, in order to wrest the 400 metres from the Englishman, Lieut. Halswelle, a certain winner, one of the Americans in the final was told off to jostle him. This was known beforehand and the American manager warned that in case of a foul the race would be called off and re-run on the morrow in tapes. Nevertheless the Englishman was pushed off his line, as everyone in the stadium could see. The word "pushed" indeed is unsuitable, for Halswelle's chest went black and blue from the force of the elbow used. But the cream of the incident was the vociferous indignation of the American and the withdrawal of all his men from the race. The next day five tapes were fixed and Halswelle ran over alone.

# "Up De Valera!"

By Ian Colvin

**M**R. Lloyd George has had the mortification of seeing two of his great achievements crumble into ruin simultaneously after standing for little more than a decade—his settlement of Europe and his settlement of Ireland. Von Papen brought down the one and de Valera put his foot through the other. It was by a miracle they stood so long as they did. Schiedemann and Brüning had undermined the Treaty of Versailles. Cosgrave had undermined the Irish Treaty, so that they both toppled over with a touch.

The Irish Treaty was protected by certain "Safeguards," which, as our statesmen assured us, were ample and sufficient to protect every British interest. The curious thing about the present controversy is that these safeguards have not been so much as mentioned. They were merely fraudulent devices intended to deceive the Conservative Party—and they served their turn. In the same way the promoters of Home Rule for India are persuading the Conservatives that every British interest in India will be carefully safeguarded. "Once bitten, twice shy" is a proverb that does not apply to political credulity.

The truth is that there is no substitute for power. If a Government be handed over to friends there is some ground for expecting that the conditions of transfer will be respected. When it is handed over to unreconciled opposites there is no such expectation.

## *Oaths and Bonds*

The Coalition had no ground for expecting otherwise. De Valera and his faction were the inevitable alternative to the signatories. They were Republican; they did not conceal the fact; it was certain that when Mr. Cosgrave and his party fell out of favour, the Republicans would come into power. The inevitable happened; Mr. de Valera came into office to repudiate both oath and bond. The oath of an Irish politician is not a commodity on which any man of sense would set too high a value; but the bond represents good British money.

When Mr. Lang repudiated the obligations of New South Wales the British Governor dismissed him from office. That course was justified by the presumption that an Australian electorate would honour a contract, and as a matter of fact it supported the action of Sir Philip Game. There was no such presumption in the Irish Free State. This was not because of any dishonesty in the Irish people. On the contrary, the Irish farmers have always paid their annuities regularly; they recognised that they had been generously treated; that they had made a good bargain with the British Treasury; that they were getting value for their money, and so they paid and would have gone on paying until they completed the purchase of their land.

It was because the obligation was sunk in a political issue that the debt was dishonoured.

De Valera makes cunning appeal to every Irish prejudice and passion. He has besides behind him influences and powers unsuspected in England: Irish American money subscribed on the principle of "a cent for bread and a dollar for lead."

The Irish Americans are like the ancient Romans: they pay for a fight—and Ireland is their arena. The Secret Societies, the Terrorist organisations; they stand round de Valera, not so much to guard as to coerce him. If he appears on a public occasion in the country, he is attended not by police or a detachment of the "regular" army but by a gang of I.R.A. gunmen—a circumstance which suggests the realities of his position.

## *The Wild Women*

Further in the shadow there are the Communists, who support de Valera because he is hostile to Great Britain; they have both means and power; which are used to coerce and direct the feeble Labour Party in Ireland and their feeble allies in Great Britain. There are besides "the wild women," the fanatics of Fianna Fail, and those exalted and excited Celts who think they can create an Ireland in the image of Brian Boru. All these motley elements constitute a force which is not constitutional. (Constitutionalism, indeed, has but a slender and superficial hold upon Ireland.) They are none the less formidable in the way of coercion and intimidation, and they have the support of all the discontents disappointed in their large expectations of the Cosgrave Government.

As these elements control or include rather more than half the electorate, the Royal prerogative, however well justified, could not have been used with any prospect of success. There remained two alternatives—to submit to sheer robbery or collect the debt by means of the Customs.

I do not forget that the alternative of arbitration was proposed—rather weakly—by the British Government. It was dodged by de Valera, because when you mean to take money which manifestly does not belong to you there is no point in going to arbitration about it.

## *The Communists' Hope*

To collect through the Customs was the only way left, short of re-occupying the country. Looked at broadly it is something of a national tragedy, since Imperial preference which might have united the two countries, is now turned inside out to divide them. I do not see that the British Government could have done anything else, yet the method they have been forced to adopt has its obvious disadvantages. In the first place it hits in Ireland the substantial farmers, the merchants and the tradespeople, who, I suppose, partly belong to Mr. Cosgrave's party and are partly Loyalist. The expectation is that they will bring pressure to bear on their Government or force a General Election and turn de Valera out; but it is

doubtful if they have the power to do either of these two things. De Valera and his friends stand to lose nothing; they even gain by the growth of discontent and the resulting animosities. The Communists look to economic trouble as the best seed ground of their propaganda.

On his side de Valera will hit back, and hit as hard as he can. There are large business interests in Ireland and he aims at their destruction. It is difficult for the good Englishman who cherishes no animosity to understand that he is the centre of a sort of ideal hatred in the breasts of these pugnacious Celts. Their disordered minds are full of dreams of revenge for imaginary wrongs—or injuries so far in the past that we have forgotten them.

In these circumstances I do not anticipate an early settlement of this dispute, although I fail to

see how it could have been avoided. The present Irish Free State Government are out for trouble: we can make up our minds to that. "Up de Valera!" is a slogan which means Down with the British. It also means, if they can summon the courage, Down with the Ulster Government: it means further an attack on the present order of things under the guise of setting up some sort of ideal Gaelic State, and incidentally there is a crow to be picked with the Roman Catholic Church, which is accused of supporting the late Government. All these implications suggest that if the British Government had not chosen to stand firm on the Annuities, it would have been forced into a quarrel on something else. And the advice holds good—

**Beware**

Of entrance to a quarrel; but being in,  
Bear 't, that the opposed may beware of thee.

## No Manner of Play

By The Saturday Reviewer

**E**ALING is a comparatively wealthy and just normally intelligent suburb about six miles west of the Marble Arch. Its inhabitants are reputed to have strong views about Lausanne and to indulge in acrimonious debates about Geneva. They play bridge, and golf, and tennis, and indulge in other mild pursuits like trying to find the winner of the Stewards' Cup. Therefore they are much akin to those who people other suburbs and towns. But they insist on having their own crises (as distinct from those imposed on them by high rates and tram-lines), and they have just passed through one on the great issue whether children should be allowed to swing and "chute" in the public parks on Sundays. The crisis was heightened by a councillor who declared that a continued prohibition of these evil amusements would "win such a victory as will make the Devil and the gates of Hell shake."

### *Where Youth Might Corrupt*

But would it? Is it not just as likely that healthy, happy children swinging in the sunshine of a summer Sabbath would make the Devil frown and the gates of Hell go rusty?

They need not swing all day long; they would most assuredly be sick if they tried to. But are they going to take a greater interest in the Sunday School or in the Church service if they are told by a Town Council that the God Whom they go to worship and are taught to love regards an open-air Sunday game as the path to eternal damnation? May it not be that joyous youngsters who play as well as pray make the Devil shake much more than the sulky ones who pray because they are made to? Unless, of course, you are thinking of the Devil shaking with glee.

It may seem rather a shame that Ealing should be coupled up with the Devil in this way (although some of its councillors play devilish bad golf on Sundays), but it has itself to thank for providing a weird example of a dangerous narrow-mindedness and intolerance that exist to a far greater degree than in these days is generally supposed.

The "Continental Sunday" Bogey has been stripped long ago. Most people know it now for

what it is—a sensibly free and rather quiet day strangely distinct from those drab and coffin-like Sundays in towns where sadness is official but where secret debauchery is rife because open happiness is barred.

So what really is the trouble? It probably dates back no further than forty or fifty years ago to when a few rebellious souls, driven to desperation by the weekly restraint imposed on them, set off in a "waggonette" with a trumpet and an accordion, and drank those extra pints of beer not because they desired them but because they had been denied more innocent pleasures which they thought they had a right to have. They were probably bored with the whole affair but they had been taught that it was a deadly sin to fish, or to play rounders, or to bicycle, or to go nutting on a Sunday. So they broke away. It was they who created the idea of the "Continental Sunday."

### *Not Fools*

Nobody really enjoys noise. Nobody really wants to litter up the countryside with paper bags and lumps of glass. Nobody really wants to blow a trumpet unless he is paid fabulous sums for doing it at a music-hall. Very few people really want to be a nuisance—and they are in such a small minority as compared with policemen and asylum staffs that they do not matter. But, on the other hand, nobody wants to be told that he must not play tennis on a Sunday afternoon unless he possesses his own court (suitably concealed). And most certainly nobody believes that the Gates of Hell will shake if a child is forbidden to swing in a public park. The Devil is not such a fool as that. Neither is God.

Compulsory Communism is easy. Compulsory Church-going is not. But eager, devout, satisfying Church-going is the easiest thing in the world to obtain. The parson who took a cricket team to church the other Sunday morning, played for them against a rival eleven in the afternoon, and took them back to church in the evening was getting very near the root of the matter.

He really did help to make the Devil and the Gates of Hell shake.



# On Which Road ?

By John Pollock

**H**APPY Englishmen in our island home! How right and tight it seems, how effectively we are severed by Channel and North Sea from the imbrolios of the Continent! We felt so before 1914, with more excuse perhaps: we still feel so, with none. The sea is no longer what it was. The fate of the Spanish Armada, the impotence of Napoleon's camp at Boulogne, examples of England's birthright to consider herself as something apart from Europe that are enforced on us from babyhood, have not yet lost the force of their impress. That Great Britain was within a few weeks of being starved into surrender, and that London escaped from being all but blotted out only through the German airmen not realising that they were above it, has passed in less than fifteen years from Englishmen's memories. To most of them the war waged from 1914 to 1918 seems now like an interlude in a happy, detached history of our own.

Yet it is essential that we should remember, not to keep alive past antagonisms but to preserve ourselves in an uncertain future. Aviation and submarines have made England definitely, indissolubly part of Europe. This does not directly or necessarily affect our commercial policy: but it must immensely affect our foreign policy. On the issues of foreign policy, that is, the direction given to relations with other States, hang the moral and spiritual life, often the material prosperity, and sometimes the life itself, of a nation. Of our nation, as well as of others. We forget this. But we must not allow ourselves to forget. We cannot afford to forget.

## Get to Facts

It seems absurd that such elementary notions should need to be reiterated. But has the war resulted in our having any stable or certain foreign policy? The war itself might have been averted had our policy then been more stable and certain. To such degree of certainty and stability as it possessed, due in large measure to the foresight of Field Marshal Sir H. Wilson and of Marshal Foch, we owed our safety: without the preliminary understanding between the British and French staffs, we, as well as our allies, would have played the part of a singularly sorry underdog. Safety attained, and victory won in the teeth of odds implied in forty years' preparation on the other side, we have thought it clever to say "as you were." Her charger stabled, England mounted her hack and ambled back to the position whence the trumpet of war so rudely roused her. Edward VII had a policy: Lord Salisbury had a policy. We lived on their results for years. But when they were gone, we reverted to the futile business of trying to ward off dangers and circum-

vent difficulties as they occurred, without any general plan, and above all, without analysing face-values.

Let us review the facts: facts as they are, not as we would wish them to be. In policy illusion is stuff for the dreams of fools. The armistice and the treaty of peace left Germany beaten, but without the sense of having been beaten in the field, and many German patriots with the determination to upset the results of the war. Their numbers have grown, and are now swollen into a vast concourse, while we thought to diminish them by concessions made in the hope of strengthening the supposed new, peaceful and republican Germany. In 1923 a very moderate and well-informed German journalist said to me in Berlin: "I do not suppose there are more than half a million men in Germany who definitely desire war." The figure to-day can only be guessed, but the guess may be guided by the successive stages marked by the election of Field Marshal von Hindenburg to the Presidency, the return of the ex-Crown Prince to his country, the explosion of nationalism after the premature evacuation of the Rhine, and now the virtually definite victory of Hitlerism in North Germany. Sometimes openly, at others secretly, Germany has been ruled by a junta composed of the Reichswehr chiefs, bureaucrats of the Wilhelmstrasse, Junkers and big industrialists. Now the junta has evicted from power in Prussia the remains of its only internal opponents, the Socialists.

## German Policy

What then is the aim of German policy to-day? Seven years ago the man who is now one of its chief directors said frankly to a French ambassador: "First we shall concentrate on the abolition of Reparations. When that is attained we shall concentrate on the Anschluss with Austria. Then we shall concentrate on the Polish corridor and the Silesian frontier." "And after that?" asked the Frenchman. "Then," said the German, "we shall see." In fine, the German aim is the complete reversal of the Treaty of Versailles and the restitution to Germany of her position in 1914.

There is no secret in all this. Anyone not acquainted with notorious events has only to read the recently published papers of Stresemann to see that it is true. Here lies the key to Germany's attitude at the Disarmament Conference and her refusal, in company with all her ancient and her potential allies, to sign the preliminary resolution unless complete freedom to arm to the limit set for others is accorded her. Why does Germany want this freedom? No one threatens her or could want to do so. The answer is that she wishes, having practically got rid of reparations, to be ready for the Anschluss, Dantzig, Upper Silesia, and the "we shall see" thereafter.

### Under Which Flag?

Meanwhile she has done very well. The Interallied Military Control Commission, abolished after becoming effete, was unable even to estimate the number of guns, undiscovered, that should have been surrendered, or to obtain the gauges for the manufacture of big guns, or to prevent the Reichswehr and the Schützpolizei from being, contrary to treaty obligations, turned into the nursery for a large army; at the same time a considerable proportion of the youth of Germany has received military training in barely clandestine organisations, and former officers have been kept together by an extensive system of corps and regimental associations. The construction of the "pocket" battleships could not be concealed. But indeed there has hardly been any concealment about the whole process. It is hard to know which

to admire more—German frankness or German patriotic persistence. Already Germany is near the stage of being able to demand, and perhaps to take, what she wants. If satisfaction be given her on major Disarmament questions, that stage will be attained.

It therefore behoves England to make up her mind. If we wish to prevent Germany from reaching her goal, and reversing the decision of the war, we must frankly take our stand with France and, by renewing the Entente Cordiale, provoke a degree of prudence in Germany that may last long enough for the whole European picture to change. If we do not, the sooner we make up our minds the better. We know the price that must be paid for Germany's full friendship, and nothing else would do. But the one thing we cannot afford to do is to boggle and beat about the bush, saying neither yea nor nay.

## The Cost of Milk

By L. C. Trumper

THE milk producer has been informed by the Milk Commission that no price scheme can be put forward in time for next year's contract period, which begins on October 1st. When the scheme comes, it is certain that an effort will have been made to give him a fair compensation for his labours without injuring the distributor or demanding from the consumer more than a reasonable price.

It is almost certain that prices will be re-established on the former basis of a retail price of sevenpence per quart during seven months of the year and sixpence a quart for five months. On this basis the producer should receive at least a shilling per gallon and it is hoped that the Commission will in addition favour further protection for the creamery industry against foreign competition, which at to-day's prices is little short of dumping.

The milk problem is, an essential factor in the national health. Its supply depends on distribution and production. The system which distributes the milk daily and ensures its purity and quality deserves attention for its remarkable efficiency.

Yet distribution is probably easier than production, since the supply in bulk by the producer from week to week is practically constant, and there is little variation in the consumers' demand.

The producer, on the other hand, has to regulate the whole of his farm throughout the year to one end—that of producing as nearly as possible a level and constant stream of milk. He has to grow his food, he has to calve down his cows at correct intervals, he has to buy his foods in the open market, risk disease of his animals and generally contend with adverse weather conditions.

The consumer has been in the habit of paying for many years sevenpence a quart for seven months and sixpence a quart for five months, or in other words, an average of 26d. per gallon of milk. This year prices have been abnormal and

the consumer has paid on the average only 22d. per gallon, out of which the producer has received 10½d. per gallon for milk, carriage paid to London, and the distributor, for bottling and delivering, has received 11½d. a gallon—a truly remarkable state of affairs.

During the past few years the distributors' margin has slowly crept up, whilst that of the producer has shrunk, until to-day it has reached a ridiculous figure which will endanger the nation's health if it is allowed to stay there.

The average London price is arrived at by paying through the year an average of a shilling and a halfpenny a gallon for 75 per cent. of the milk produced, and for the remaining 25 per cent. a price based on the average price of Canadian and New Zealand cheese per pound, less 2d.

The latter has worked out at an average of a little over 4½d. per gallon at the sender's railway station. The effect of this on a dairy with a 10 per cent. variation in production is to make the average price per gallon throughout the year something like 10½d. per gallon delivered in London.

Now the farmer has to deliver his milk to the station (which costs on the average ½d. per gallon) and his carriage costs roughly 1½d. a gallon, so that he is getting nett on the farm approximately 8½d. per gallon for his milk according to his contract terms. In actual fact at these figures the incentive to produce was considerably diminished during the winter months, and the nation's milk supply fell to such an extent that a serious shortage became imminent.

Disaster was only averted by the distributors raising the price over and above the contract prices during two or three months to stimulate the producers' interest. Even then, a large amount of milk had to be imported from the continent at a high price to make up the quantity.

## THIS WEEK'S ARGUMENT

## Are Holidays Good ?

YES.—By G. WALTERSON.

**I**N the first place, holidays are necessary. Men may have been so strong that they come to fourscore years so inhuman that they need no holiday. Super-men, if so you please to call them, and whatever that may mean. But for men, as men, holidays are essential. Without them the machine of brain, muscle and tissue runs down or stops altogether, and suddenly.

It does not matter very much, perhaps, whether holidays are taken at set times and for a normal period, or by the perpetual prolongation of week-end leisure. I will only say that the only man I knew well who professed a preference for the prolonged week-end as against the set holiday used—though I doubt whether he knew it absolutely—to take both.

Is it likely that the laws of nature can be defied with impunity? Once in a way, even for a week or a month at a stretch, one can do with a minimum of sleep and work, with body or brain or both, almost unceasingly. That may be how battles are won, States saved, and great enterprises brought to fashion. But, generally speaking, no one can keep health and sanity who does not sleep, eat, and rest for something like sixteen hours of the day's twenty-four. In the same way, twelve months of concentration on work, without a reasonable holiday well away from the work, is a sentence of hard labour which breaks the prisoner.

And what of the mind that goes quite unrefreshed? It goes to pieces. To everyone his own idea of pleasure. Perhaps the happiest are they who can find real enjoyment in sitting, preferably in a beautiful place, and twiddling their thumbs. Others, more or less restless, must always be busied—with golf balls or books, with gambling or conversation, with their own hobby which may ride them too hard. The 'busman may even choose the 'busman's holiday. But he is driving not because he is paid to drive, because he must drive or starve, but because he enjoys driving. The essential thing is to set apart a time during which the human machine acts without exterior compulsion.

Does my opponent in argument—who, I will swear, is very little likely to practice what he preaches—contend that holidays are not enjoyable and enjoyed? We have all heard others talk like this. Few of us have believed fewer of them. Look back a moment and review the red-letter days of life, its remembered triumphs and its abiding compensations. If you are candid with yourself you will find them—in that modern and distressing phrase—"on holiday."

For my part, I am a poor, weak, fallible, sinful creature; and if I could not look beyond the weariness of work to the few weeks of a year which I may use as I please to do very much more as I please I could find no compensation for labour.

NO, BY J. DEFFELL.

**H**E who loves a quiet life can be in no doubt as to the answer to this question. Holidays are a symptom of the wretched lives of modern men, forgetful of simplicity and ease. Our ancestors knew them not. They were wise men who thought how to arrange their time and profit by it. Even now they have successors and emulators. French actors in regular work hardly ever take a holiday; journalists, virtually never.

With us there are still many university men who when vacation comes on them turn from one occupation to another, and find in a changed form of work the recreation that all men's minds need. For the term 'holidays' in its modern use means essentially doing nothing with your mind and that is very bad for it. Such holidays break the rhythm of life. They are a symbol of millions of men hating the work of their best years, or at most supporting it, only longing to get away from it.

You think the 'holidays' delightful? Not a bit of it. For a good half of the year they hang over your head like a sword of Damocles. When to take them? Where to go on them?

All students of "Punch" will remember Charles Keene's picture of an English family sitting round the room in despair, gloomy, unkind, exhausted. Is it a prophetic picture of England taking its morning 'hate' like another celebrated picture in 1914? No. Father, mother and the children are merely discussing where to go for the holidays.

Shall it be the English seaside? Uncomfortable lodgings, poor food, lack of rational amusement, all at prices put up to the limit. Shall it be abroad? The annoyance of passports, luggage, seasickness, rapacious hotelkeepers, overcrowding trains. And everywhere an intolerable crowd rushing at the same moment to places too few to hold them and all wanting to do the same things when they get there. This, too, supposing that the weather allows anything to be done at all.

Small wonder that the average man comes back from his holidays weary in spirit, often with his digestion upset, always with his pocket empty. Sometimes he returns with health seriously impaired, or not at all. How many do not rush to the Riviera to be struck down by pneumonia contracted in the treacherous chill of evening? How many to exhilarating winter sports, returning whence they spend the rest of winter dragging round influenza colds?

Would you motor out on a fine Saturday or Sunday? The roads are choked and the home-comer crawls in an endless queue, breathing dust and carbon monoxide, happy to avoid a smash. Needless to ask what sensible man leaves the shelter of home on the apex and perfect type of holiday, Bank Holiday. The answer is, none. To be compelled to, is to pass your day in lunatic misery. No, no, a thousand times no. What we should seek is not to break the even tenour of life.



# Might-Have-Been Affairs

## The Collapse of a Bridge

By C. E. Bechhofer Roberts

IT was certainly most regrettable that Waterloo Bridge should collapse on the very evening when its salvation from the L.C.C. vandals was being celebrated. The Friends of Waterloo Bridge were holding a "victory fête" on the bridge, to which they had invited a representative company of people celebrated in all walks of life. The beautiful summer night, with the full moon pouring down its rays out of an ultramarine sky, provided a perfect setting for the occasion. The proceedings opened with a speech by Mr. D. S. MacColl; he congratulated himself and his associates on preserving Waterloo Bridge from those ignorant and extravagant bureaucrats who thought its destruction and re-building necessary in the interests of safety. The next speech was made in unison by seven mayors of adjacent London districts, all in their robes of office.

The Hon. John Collier, speaking on behalf of Beautiful Art, said that the Bridge was more than a mere structure of stone; it was a symbol of the solidity that distinguished the nineteenth century, than which, he claimed without fear of contradiction, no epoch in the world's history could show a nobler record in art, philosophy, industry and morals. Mr. William Farren, speaking on behalf of the artists—in stone or on the boards—of the nineteenth century, recited a few reminiscences of those good old days. Two gentlemen, each of whom insisted that he spoke on behalf of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, then ascended the improvised platform in the middle of the bridge; but they were stopped by Mr. MacColl before they actually came to blows.

Next the Camargo Ballet Society presented a new ballet, set to music by Mr. Jack Hylton on old French themes. Just as the gymnasts—I call them this, because the choreography was in the fashionable Diaghileff-Massine style—reached the climax of their performance, one dancer supporting most of the others on his stalwart frame, and all singing "Sur le pont Waterloo, dances-tu, dances-tu?" a sound of wrenching stone was heard, which was followed by the collapse of the entire central portion of the bridge.

Among those precipitated into the water were: Corrigan and another party; Mr. Willie Clarkson; Mr. Eddie Marsh (representing the Prime Minister and the leader of the Opposition); The Spanish Ambassador; The Chilean Minister; The Japanese Ambassador; The representatives of several Chinese Governments; Mr. Winston Churchill (representing Mr. Randolph Churchill); Mrs. Corrigan and another party; Mr. Willie Clarkson;

The Italian Minister (in a black shirt); A Soviet diplomat (in the same, unintentionally); The Grand Duke Ivan (with taxi); The Grand Duke Igor (with Stop-me-and-buy-one barrow); Mr. Osbert Sitwell (representing Mr. Sacheverell

Sitwell); Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell (representing Mr. Osbert Sitwell); Miss Edith Sitwell (representing the six other Muses); Lord Castlerosse (representing Literature and Lord Beaverbrook);

Mrs. Merrick (representing the House of Lords); The Nicaraguan Minister; The Liberian Minister (representing the Anti-Slavery League); Sir Oliver Lodge (representing the best of both worlds); Sir Oswald Mosley (representing the proletariat); Mr. Bernard Darwin (representing Science); Dr. Marie Stopes (representing Sport); Mr. de Valera (representing United Ireland); Mr. Gandhi (representing India); Mr. Richard Sickert (representing Mr. Walter Sickert);

The Venezuelan Minister; The Bolivian Minister; The Patagonian Minister (representing the European section of the League of Nations); Mr. H. V. Morton (representing Mr. J. B. Morton); Mr. Wyndham Lewis (representing Mr. D. B. Wyndham Lewis); Colonel Lawrence; Colonel Barker; A B.B.C. Announcer (representing the Lancashire Cottonspinners' Amalgamation); Mr. George Robey; Mr. Justice McCardie; Mr. Will Hayes; Mr. Gordon Selfridge (as neutral observer); etc., etc.

It may be noticed that my own name does not appear in the above list, but I was, nevertheless, thrown into the Thames with my betters and found myself, when I came to the surface, swimming between Lady Astor and Mr. Jack Jones, M.P., towards the Middlesex bank. "What a marvellous thing water is!" I heard Lady Astor remark to my other neighbour. Mr. Jones replied, so far as I could distinguish his words, that he might never have had any schooling but he was as good a man as we were; that Waterloo Bridge had been built with the blood and sweat of the poor; and that it was all very well for us to despise him but there were many people in Silvertown who despised us much more.

I was then pulled ashore by Mr. MacColl, who had rather appropriately been underpinned by the mast of a small sailing-vessel that happened to be passing beneath the bridge when it fell. He at once called me to witness that he had been justified in his frequent statements that there was not the slightest need to pull Waterloo Bridge down.

I learned afterwards of various other incidents which accompanied the collapse of the bridge. For example, the body of a policeman was found floating next morning near Tilbury. It was clear that he too had been present on the bridge when it fell and had not succeeded in swimming clear. From the fact that a number of betting slips were found in one of his pockets, the authorities assumed that he was voluntarily engaged in collecting evidence for the Royal Committee on Lotteries and Gambling.

# Red Letter Days

## The First Trout of a Life-Time

By Guy C. Pollock

ONE comes back always to one's first love—and the saying is certainly true in sport.

If I try to recapture in remembering them some of the days which field, river and wood have filled for me with the utmost of content, the first one that comes to me is a morning by a trout stream of Cornwall.

That morning comes to me because there and then I caught my first trout. But the morning does not stand alone, for it is, as it was, a culmination of hopes, fears, efforts and events. The preparation for that morning was begun more than a year earlier when—a little boy of nine—I had been armed with my first fishing rod. I should explain (gratitude would indeed be dead if I did not) that I was the fortunate owner of two uncles—say, rather, great-uncles—who owned each a house, one in Devonshire, on the edge of Dartmoor, with miles of private fishing, the other in Cornwall, above the junction of the Tamar and a smaller trout-stream. What is more, and more proper to great-uncles, every summer holiday of my life for some eight years was spent between the two.

### *Rods and Engines*

At this early age of nine, then, I had my first fishing rod. Before that I had dragged my poor, dear, timid, and never requited mother to watch me dabble in a glassy, hopeless pool above the weir the wood-louse impaled somehow on a single hook at the end of a cheap line, secured anyhow to the top-joint of an expanding bamboo contraption, which even a tiddler would have smashed. Fortunately, nothing happened on these occasions, not even death by drowning for either of us.

So I got my fly-rod. It was a monstrous engine. It must have been eleven feet long; it was very solidly built of green heart, and I daresay I might be happy enough to-day fishing it two-handed for sea trout. When I think of the sort of rods I have given to boys—discarded rods, of course, lest you accuse me of any rash generosity—I am the more amazed by this rod that was given to me. How a small and not too sturdy boy managed to wield it at all I do not know. What I do know is that he threw or hurled a fly with it day in and day out, for the most part of every day during three weeks of a summer holiday in Devonshire. He did this for one summer holidays. He did it again the next year. Then came the other week in Cornwall, and in September, when the troutish appetites of these streams wake up again.

There also I hurled my flies and still nothing happened. If I had gone back to London, and so to school, without the glimmer of a trout I think I should still have been a fisherman. I had, after all, been allowed to land trout for contemptuous cousins and irascible great-uncles. But I should have gone on with a complete, if then

unrecognised, inferiority complex.

This heart-rending failure was, however, avoided. I caught my first trout. On the very last day of my holiday in Cornwall I went down, across the lawn, through the stable-yard, past the kitchen garden, down the lane and across the meadow to the river. It was, as I now remember, a warm and sun-lit September morning. The stream must have been low and the water unusually clear. I had no idea of a floating fly or fine and far-off or of how and when to strike—a necessity or opportunity not yet presented to me. But some notion of concealment had been drilled into me and this was indeed essential, as I could only propel my bungling line and fly a few yards.

So I crouched behind a bush on my own bank and looked upstream into a clear and gentle run. Then after a moment or so, I saw clearly two trout. I cannot remember that either was feeding and I imagine that they had taken post to feed and were just poised. Obviously hopeful fish. Anyhow for the boy two obvious trout and mightily large—"proper benders" as they then said in the west country. So I fell to a knee and hurled the fly forward in their direction. Now the coch-y-bondhu has a buzzly body and perhaps a breeze was at my back and surely an all-wise Providence directed finally the tip of the pole which I mistook for a rod. Certainly the fly fell just beyond the nearest fish and floated—floated quite accidentally over him. I saw a ring, I felt a tug. I struck or jerked or yanked in sheer frenzy, and a quarter-pound trout came flying out of the water, over my head, and on to the meadow behind.

### *Nothing Greater*

I am sure I went very white in my small face and then very red. I can still hear my heart thump and feel my knees tremble. I gloated over that fish. I wanted to run madly back, up the lane, past the kitchen garden, through the stable-yard, across the lawn and tell my mother and rouse the house and spread the great news. But, after I had succeeded in killing the trout according to my instructions, I thought of the other trout.

He was still there. Providence was still watching—on my behalf. He came out in exactly the same way.

Then indeed I did run, bearing with me this miraculous draught of fishes. And even Tickel the gardener slapped me—quite hard—on the back. "Good for you, Mas'r Guy" he said—words to that effect.

I have sometimes been congratulated in later years on accidents or achievements more supposedly important. I know now, as I knew then, that no event could be so startling in its significance, so fateful in its influence. Thus and only thus is Boy made Fisherman.

# A French Ambadressess

By Francis Gribble

**N**O women need apply for employment in the French diplomatic service. So the Senate decided, the other day; and the decision is interesting, if not remarkable, because France is the one country in Europe which can produce a really striking story of a woman who took charge of an important diplomatic mission.

The date was 1705. The occasion was that of a commercial mission to Persia, despatched by M. de Pontchartrain. The head of the mission was a certain M. Fabre, a Marseilles merchant. Its personnel included a surgeon, two priests, a cartographer, a number of "experts," and male attendants of various degrees—about fifty persons in all. It embarked on a French war vessel; and it had hardly cleared the port when a strange thing happened. One of the male attendants went to his cabin, and, after a brief space, re-appeared in feminine attire, and was presented to the company as Mlle. Petit, "Ambadressess of the French Princesses."

She was not, of course, officially accredited in that capacity, nor was she the sort of person who could have been thus accredited. She was, in fact, the daughter of a laundress and a lady of light reputation who had acquired a competence by selling her favours in the dearest markets. M. Fabre had been one of her clients; and it had been agreed between them that her reward was to be a journey, in his company, to the Court of the King of Kings at Ispahan. The title of Ambadressess was one which she had bestowed upon herself; and the interest of the story lies in the fact that, before her return, she found, or, rather, seized, an opportunity of serving her country in that capacity.

## *A Light Hearted Lady*

Her behaviour, it is true, was somewhat lacking in ambassadorial correctitude. At Aleppo, where she was lodged in the French Consulate, she sent for a fife and drum band, and entertained her guests with songs and dances, like an Opera artiste. The clerical members of the Mission remonstrated with her on her light-hearted indifference to the prescriptions of decorum, and even went so far as to threaten her with excommunication; but she snapped her fingers in their faces, and her protector, the Head of the Mission, took her part. If they insulted this respectable lady, he told them, he should send home a report on their own conduct which they would find very unpleasant reading. That threat, presumably for good reason, alarmed them. They let Mlle. Petit live her own life without regard to their admonitions; and that was how, in the end, she got her chance of becoming an Ambadressess in fact as well as in name.

The Mission had, at last, arrived at Erivan, where it had to await the Sha's permission to enter his dominions. It cut a dash while waiting there; and Mlle. Petit was a great success. The Turks,

at Aleppo, had objected to her unceremonious levity; but the Persians, at Erivan, delighted in it. The French Ambassador at Constantinople had, indeed, reported to the French Foreign Office that her skirts were too short to satisfy the demands of modesty; but the Persians did not mind that. The Khan of Erivan, in particular, was very attentive to her and very hospitable to the Mission; and his hospitality had a sequel. The farewell banquet which he gave to the Mission made M. Fabre ill.

"They have poisoned me," he cried; and he was carried to his lodging, where he died in Mlle. Petit's arms.

The position was difficult. The possibility of M. Fabre's death had been overlooked. The Mission had been provided with no second-in-command; so that discipline broke down, and all was chaos and confusion. Some of the party proposed that they should divide the presents which they were to have offered to the Shah—clocks, watches, thermometers, barometers, paintings and cases of liqueurs—and disperse. Others wished to entrust the keys of the baggage to M. Fabre's son—a lad of fifteen who yelled at the awful prospect of such responsibility.

## *How She Took Charge*

"Give me the keys," she said. "I am going to take charge of this Mission in the character of Ambadressess of the French Princesses." Whether she should do so or not depended, of course, upon the view which the Persians took of her proposal; and their views were entirely favourable. There was opposition to her authority in her own camp; but they helped her to deal with it. One of her opponents was bastinadoed, and another died in a Persian prison. Others, who had been arrested for rioting, were released when she made diplomatic representations on their behalf; and when, in consequence of the news which had reached Constantinople, a certain M. Michel arrived at Erivan with instructions to send Mlle. Petit home and proceed to Ispahan in M. Fabre's place, he found that those instructions could not be carried out. An order had come from Ispahan to the effect that he must return to Constantinople, but that Mlle. Petit was invited to proceed to Ispahan and, as Ambadressess of the French Princesses, tell the Persian ladies all about the Paris fashions.

So she went there, splendidly escorted, and was received in audience by the Shah, and spent two days in his capital in the grand style of a fully accredited emissary of her country; and M. Ferriol, the Ambassador at Constantinople, who had endeavoured to supersede her, having interviewed her on her way back to France, reported that she had taken good care of the property of the Mission and that he could find "nothing to condemn" in her proceedings.



## FILMS

BY MARK FORREST.

*Behind the Mask.* Directed by John Francis Dillon. Capitol.

*Disorderly Conduct.* Directed by John Considine Junior. New Gallery.

*After Office Hours.* Directed by Thomas Bentley. Regal.

THERE has been a certain amount of fuss made over several of the incidents depicted in "Behind the Mask," a thriller which comes to the Capitol. Personally I find it very difficult to take this kind of picture seriously owing to the poverty of the dialogue and the absurdity of the situations. The plot of this film is the unmasking of the head of a drug organisation. This villain's identity baffles the American Secret Service, but when Hart, played by Jack Holt, arrives on the scene, skeins become unravelled. I cannot, however, feel any sympathy for a young woman who rushes into the sanctum of the chief of the secret service screaming, "my father's life is in jeopardy"; neither does my hair stand on end when bodies are exhumed to an accompanying chorus of banal remarks.

It is a very clean coffin which is pulled out of its narrow home, and when the lid is opened there is nothing in it but bags and bags of "dope." The explanation of this unwarranted use of a cemetery is that Mr. X owns a nursing home where he kills off his patients; he also apparently possesses the extraordinary gift of being able to make their bodies disappear into thin air—at any rate there is no explanation of what happens to the carcasses of his victims. Between the hospital and the cemetery, or perhaps at the cemetery itself, drugs take their place, and that is all one is allowed to know about it.

### The Poised Scalpel

Jack Holt traces this Mr. X to his nursing home and is himself the next victim. The villain stands with poised scalpel when, would you believe it, the girl, whose father's life is no longer in jeopardy but now in oblivion, rushes in and disturbs what promises to be a most interesting operation by shooting the surgeon. In my publicity matter I was told that "the operation is performed as the victim looks on so that he can see as well as feel himself dying. Only a local anaesthetic is administered, and then with the scalpel the doctor digs through the body wall and cuts the nerve which is of major importance in respiration. Strangulation results."

Here is a wealth of detail and a pithy finish, but the filmgoer finds himself fobbed off with an up-raised knife and Jack Holt's bare chest. A revolver shot and the collapse of Mr. X under the operating table is poor compensation for what promised to be an instructive five minutes. It would never do, I suppose, to put any more ideas into the heads of our surgeons, yet people in general are so ignorant

of the construction of their anatomy, that I hoped the desire to impart knowledge might prevail over the fear that our surgeons would be tempted to try a little strangulation on their own account by this novel, if somewhat complicated, method.

No one can complain that there is any lack of action in "Behind the Mask," for something, however ridiculous, is happening all the time. The trouble with "After Office Hours," the new film at the Regal, is that nothing is happening at any time in this screen version of Mr. Van Druten's "London Wall."

So far Mr. Van Druten's work in the theatre has been distinguished for the simplicity of its dialogue and the naturalness of the characterisation. Up till now I have not seen a play of his which lends itself to cinematograph treatment, and "London Wall" is perhaps the most unsuitable of the three or four which have been recently produced. Mr. Bentley, who has directed this leisurely unfolding of the lives of four shorthand typists, has made little attempt to quicken the tempo. The chatter of these women, the transparent lecherousness of the junior partner and the cockney omniscience of the office boy make too slender a scaffolding on which to build a picture.

### A Miner's Picture

In support there is another film, called "Black Diamonds;" one cannot measure this by ordinary standards since it is the work of a Mr. Hammer, who is by profession a miner and not a cinema director. The picture is sincere but suffers from all those faults which are to be expected. The scenario is all over the place, the continuity is sketchy and the acting poor, but if the venture serves no other purpose it does at any rate show what could be accomplished if our big producing companies did not anchor their cameras to the studios. In a welter of loose ends there are some fine "shots" of the coal mines, but "Cameradschaft" makes one a little impatient even with those.

"Disorderly Conduct" is the new picture at the New Gallery. This is a sound piece of work which is accomplished very slickly according to the best American methods. Bootlegging and the bribery of the police form the theme and the action never halts, except for the usual sentimental interlude, from the time that Dick Fay, excellently played by Spencer Tracy, has his sergeant's stripes taken away from him for going straight until he recovers them for much the same reason. As a section of the American police force apparently does the job for which it is paid, the picture has a moral significance to which one is unaccustomed. Sally Eilers makes a charming heroine and both the acting and the direction are very competent.

The general releases this week contain nothing that is out of the ordinary. "After To-morrow" is full of sentimentality and contains Charles Farrell. "Panama Flo" with Charles Bickford and Helen Twelvetrees is quite as unpleasant as its title indicates.

## SHORT STORY

## Mrs. Chinbury Goes Quite Mad

By Reginald Duff

"A PECULIAR THING" Mrs Chinbury said, "has happened to me to-day. Something coiled tight in me has been set loose. You must hear about it, Henry, for it concerns you closely. I have realised the ultimate tragedy of our married life. It's no good trying to excuse it or pretend that it doesn't matter, for it *does* matter—and truth should always be free. So listen, my dear, for what I am going to say is true, oh bitterly true."

"First I must go back a little, back to the time when the truth of our love was locked away and complete in me, before, step by step and stealthily, it escaped in the fog of your laziness. You remember Cookstone?" ("Of course," said the man in the chair.) "That was where we met. By the river it was, backed by great hills of trees. I lived with my parents there, and you were down for a month's holiday, staying at the local Hotel. That was where I met you, at one of the extraordinary dances they ran—all patent leather pumps and claret cup. You were nice looking then, and drunk with inexperience. We used to walk in the woods. It was high summer, everything was green, and the sun poured warmly down on us through the sweet lace of the leaves. You had just left Cambridge, and were going to enter your father's business. In those days, though, you preferred Sir Thomas Browne to business, and you loathed the idea of what you called a bowler hatted career. You wrote me a lot of rather shaky poems. But they were sweet, and I read them in bed every night."

"The whole of our universe was rich with love. All life was only an image of the eternity we shared. And ah, we had such fun, we did—before you became bowler hatted. Each moment of that time is cut quite clear in my mind. I remember the day when you dropped the jam pot in the river, and the day when you first found Chaucer, and the cricket match in the field behind the pub, and the day that we always called 'our' day in the woods—I believe you've forgotten 'our' day, Henry." ("I have certainly not" cried the man in the chair).

"At the end of that month, that blessed month, you went up to London to work. I stayed at Cookstone, watching the woods thin into tattered autumn. You used to come down for occasional week-ends, and sometimes I took a cheap return—on Wednesdays they ran them—to town, and we went to a show. And I wrote you long, deep letters—full of split infinitives and sincerity. I remember I promised, in one, to always adore you. Your letters were just as sincere, and rather more grammatical. I have them all still—ah what an old fool you must think me!"

"So after a year, a little short year, we got married. We spent our honeymoon in Cornwall. There was a hotel without a bathroom, and the

'Monarch of the Glen' above our mantelpiece. There were no people: we bathed quite naked in a little bay, and birds curved and swooped in the sunlit air above us. You remember that, I suppose?" ("God bless my soul, of course I do," exclaimed the man in the chair.) There were no Cul-de-sacs to our love. Everything blossomed and was freshened by it."

"Then we returned to London. You had your job to consider; life became venomously normal. But still we were happy. So joyfully we stamped on life, and called it ours! One day we went for a picnic in the Cookstone woods. The river was like a silver ribbon tied in the hair of spring. And the trees were candelled with buds. You picked three new primroses from a cluster that grew near the waterfall. One you kept, and put it between the leaves of the book you were reading—Moore's 'Confessions of a Young Man.' You gave the second to me, and the third you threw into the stream: we watched it float away over the edge of the waterfall. You remember?" (The man in the chair said testily "Yes, of course I remember it well.")

"Then, quite suddenly, you grew old (for age is only a matter of enthusiasm.) You lost all the divine sense of hurry in life, began to take things too easily and too seriously. You started golf and board meetings. You had been made a director, clever man. I suppose this must have been some years after we were married, but the change, when it came, was as sudden and as sad as death. You commenced to dine out a lot and to bring little brutish business men home with you at night. The cigar in your mouth seemed like a stake through your youth. And then I saw that you were a business man, like all the rest. And that I was the Wife Without Whom Your Success Would Never Have Come. I felt just like a piece of a Lord Mayor's Procession. And your love for me was so faint and tired, so chloroformed by commerce! There was nothing I could do. I loved you still as I had always loved you. With me love was a separate and beautiful thing that could not be confused with time tables and tin-tacks, nor yet with refractory servants. Material problems had nothing to do with it. But with you love was an emotion experienced beneath blankets of dinners and board meetings, felt confusedly, mechanically. Sometimes you remembered you had a wife, and I suppose you were glad in a twilit way. But oh in such a dead and muffled way. Your love was a pearl, in a cannister of porridge. How bitterly you failed to keep love holy."

"And now, your coat is black, your trousers a dull grey. You read the newspapers with your lips pursed disapprovingly, as though the universe had committed a public indiscretion. And, of course, you think I'm mad." ("Just a trifle neurotic" quavered the man in the chair.) "Soon

you'll give me a soothing drink, and tell me to go to bed. And I shall go, and that will be that: we shall not talk of these things any more. Although perhaps you'll make an appointment with a nerve specialist. You'd enjoy that. It would be a manifestation of efficiency. You've become so greyly efficient lately. When I first married you, Henry, I connected your name with Agincourt and chivalry, but whenever I hear it now I think of nothing but bowler hats. You're just a poor little business man, and lost to grace. You never giggle now." ("My dear . . ." cried the man in the chair.)

"And to-night you made me realise all, so that something went snap and got free. You opened the 'Confessions of a Young Man,' and there was the primrose, the pale yellow primrose, you picked from the bank by the waterfall. You threw it

away—you did, I saw you do it. Your hand scraped over the page, and brushed away the last yellow dust of our love. And I suddenly knew that I hated you. And I hate you now, for a failure and a fraud—you who have held love and broken it. Oh, I hate you with all the anger of my soul."

Vicious as a nervous child, Mrs. Chinbury slapped her husband's face, across, and across again. Then, in the way that women have, she sat down and cried for shame.

The man, half blinded by tears of pain, rose from his chair, and patted her on the shoulder. "Come, come my dear," he said, "you're not yourself. Let me get you a soothing drink, and come to bed." And he walked across the room to ring for the butler.

## The Dream Universe

By A Student of Life

THE ancients had no doubt as to the importance of dreams. In the *Odyssey* Penelope with characteristic common sense remarked that they were baffling and hard to interpret; "In no wise do they find fulfilment in all things for men. For two are the gates of shadowy dreams, and one is fashioned of horn and one of ivory. Those dreams that pass through the gate of sawn ivory deceive men, bringing words that find no fulfilment. But those that come forth through the gate of polished horn bring true issues to pass, when any mortal sees them."

Victorian science dismissed dreams as of no importance. They were caused by indigestion and almost identified with the food supposed to produce them. It occurred to no one to enquire why lobster salad should persuade one victim of a nightmare that he was being chased by a mad bull, another that all his teeth were coming out, another that he was ground to pieces by gigantesque machinery filling St. Paul's Cathedral. It was tacitly assumed that the form of a nightmare was dictated by the waking impressions that preceded it, though a moment's enquiry would have shown that the explanation was untenable.

Psychology has found a place for these fantastic dreams, whether nightmares or not, that pass through the ivory gate. They throw unerring light on the personality of the dreamer, on the clashes and struggles in his "ego," on hidden motives and impulses and the whole working of his self. They form a mirror of the self and the interpretation of their symbols is an integral part of all psycho-analysis.

The writer, however, knows that there are other dreams. The psychologist deals with the visual images which arise in the subconscious, which with the conscious forms, as it were, the outer crust of the self. Beneath that crust lies the unfathomable depth of the unconscious, the eternal self that observes experience and gives unity to the personality. There are dreams of more than sym-

bolic value, which arise not indeed in the depths of the unconscious, but at the point where it meets the outer crust.

Usually these deeper dreams are forgotten. Often they are blotted out by the surface fantastic dreams which occur at the moment of waking. One has only a vague idea that one has stepped out of a dream world which was, while one was aware of it, as real as the world of action into which one awakes.

Personally, I doubt if there is such a thing as dreamless sleep. For years I was vaguely aware that my deeper dreams were running on continuously, but it was only when external events brought them to the surface, and in a way they were fulfilled, that I discovered that half my self had escaped from my personality into a dream world. Then it rose and coalesced with the waking self.

In a little book called "The Pageant of Personality" (Rider and Co., 3s. 6d.), Mr. de Bary has tried to map out his own dream universe and those who are able to remember their own deeper dreams will find much of it interesting. The earlier part of the book dealing with the telepathy of dreams will appeal to every dreamer, though perhaps few will follow him into his "inductive study of immortality," which seems to leave us with a very tenuous future existence. The assurance of immortality lies deeper in the self than the stratum of visual images.

Mr. de Bary makes an excellent point concerning the relativity of time in dreams. They are present in a part of the self, which is outside time and we know nothing of the rules which conditions their rising into consciousness and time. Mere coincidence in time is no proof of telepathy and the reverse is also true.

At least, all mystics will agree that Mr. de Bary has well expressed their certainty, when he writes "death is a coming home to the world of our own soul."



# Patriarchal Wines

By H. Warner Allen

OVER five years ago, a port-lover wrote to me saying that he had in his cellar a magnum of Crofts 1840, bottled in 1842, which he was keeping until it had been actually ninety years in the bottle and so become senior to that "wine aged ninety" which set Dr. Middleton chirruping in "The Egoist": "I will say this:—shallow souls run to rhapsody:—I will say, that I am consoled for not having lived ninety years back or any period but the present, by this one glass of your ancestral wine."

I am glad to say that my correspondent to-day reports that his last magnum of 1840 "was as good as ever, deep ruby in colour, silky in texture and of a fine flavour." I fear that I cannot hope for so much from the two bottles of the 1834 vintage, which are still awaiting the fulfilment of their purpose and which I mean to drink when they have reached the century.

There is in a wine of great age a sentimental charm, which enhances its beauty on the palate. One judges, perhaps, a pre-phylloxera Claret or a hundred-year-old Cognac with greater indulgence than is extended to its juniors, and a hint of dryness or a suspicion of the wood is passed over in silence. Professor Saintsbury is no doubt right when he lays it down that most red wines—Port included—should be drunk before they are forty, but how much would have been lost to the world, if there had not been many exceptions.

## A Senatorial Claret

Only the other day I enjoyed a bottle of 1865 Lafite, which was perfectly admirable. It showed no signs of decrepitude, but was still full of sugar and as discreet and rich in its harmony of tastes as a Claret should be. A Médoc of sixty-seven is surely older than a Port of ninety. Taste is to a certain extent relative, and I think that that Lafite gained considerably, because it was drunk immediately after a 1924 Claret, a vigorous wine still retaining its tannin, and its mature delicacy came as a delightful contrast.

The oldest wine that I have ever tasted was a Hochheimer of 1775. It was perfectly sound, but altogether too dry to be pleasant. A little of it mixed with a younger wine gave surprising results; for its age provided a bouquet and deepness of aroma, which was remarkable, and it took on fresh life and vigour from the blend. It was like one of those hundred-year-old Sherries which one may taste in the Bodegas of Jerez. They have become a concentration of the grape—Sherry grows stronger as it grows older—which defies the appreciation of the palate. They are just salt and steel intensely concentrated, and draw from the taster the wryest of grimaces. Yet the merest trifle of such wines in a blend raises it from the commonplace to the heights of poetry.

These very ancient Sherries recall the famous Opimian wines of which Pliny wrote 192 years after their vintage. 121 B.C., when L. Opimius was Consul, was the proverbial Roman Comet year. If we can believe the tales that have come down to us, that vintage was so extraordinary that the wine was still itself at the age of a hundred and sixty—just about the age of my Hochheimer—when an amphora of it was served at a banquet given to Caligula by Pomponius Secundus, the poet. Thirty years later, Pliny admitted that it was undrinkable by itself, so dry and bitter had it become, but he adds that in very small quantities it was most valuable for improving a blend.

It is to be feared that the days of ninety-year-old wines are almost over. Everywhere wines are ripening sooner and ageing more precociously. The phylloxera has imposed the American stock on almost all the vineyards of the world, and it seems certain that the wines produced from these stocks, grafted with the native vine, come to maturity quicker and have a shorter life. It may be that, as the stocks grow accustomed to the European soils, there may be a modification in the character of the wines they produced, but, as it is, Port of recent vintages seems likely to be as old at twenty as the pre-phylloxera wines at forty, while few can hope that the beautiful Médocs of 1899 and 1900 will compete in longevity with those of the great vintages between 1864 and 1878.

## History and Sentiment

There can only be a sentimental objection to wines reaching their zenith in a short time. The thought of Napoleon may lend an additional fragrance to the Tokay Essence of 1811, that fatal Comet year which presaged the retreat from Moscow. Recollections of war may add romance to a Margaux 1870. Yet, if one can find a wine a few years old that possesses all the merits of old age, everyone would be the gainer. Hence many barbarous experiments to mature wines artificially. Unfortunately, science has not yet learned to take the place of nature, and wines unnaturally ripened are invariably beastly: witness the horrible productions of Chte. It may be said that the speeding up due to the introduction of the American stock is a natural means to a desirable end, and no doubt that would be so if quality were maintained; but the affection with which all wine-growers cling to the ancient vines which have still escaped the phylloxera suggest that they are far from confident.

This generation of wine-lovers has been fortunate; for the coming of the phylloxera scourge was heralded by some marvellous vintages—at Bordeaux especially—which gave wines of unequalled quality and longevity. The next generation is less patient, and their impatience is likely to be reflected in the wines they drink.

## NEW NOVELS

*Philip Glenn.* By Max Mohr. Translated by Countess Nora Purtscher-Wydenbruck. Sidgwick and Jackson. 7s. 6d.

*His Imported Wife.* By Beryl Clarke. Cape. 7s. 6d.

*Safe Custody.* By Dornford Yates. Hodder and Stoughton. 7s. 6d.

"**P**HILIP GLENN" is a story of two men who were frightened. It is an unusual tale because it seems at first to be dealing with men totally different from men as we know them and yet, when it is all over, there comes a disturbing little thought that they are, after all, extraordinarily like ordinary men, extraordinarily like ourselves.

Philip Glenn was frightened because he had nothing in life which seemed to be of value; nothing, that is, that he could cling to, and a man without an anchorage is of necessity a coward. Xavier Ragaz was frightened of retrogression—frightened that having spent eight years in Cadiz in another eight he would be what his father had been before him—an old fashioned Bavarian guide. The two of them were frightened and the two found solace in the other.

Both Glen and Ragaz are exaggerated portraits: the successful portrait painter of small stature and squeaky voice and the mountaineer with his overwhelming physical strength. There first appears a great antagonism and then, as picture succeeds picture, a very strong attraction between the small portrait painter and the huge Alpine climber comes in sight. Their lives seemed to be so bound together with an invisible bond that when they actually meet they have either to admit the attraction or rid themselves of their pent up feelings in hatred. Being men, they choose hatred. And so it is when humans, built out of the same piece of clay, suddenly find themselves face to face; a quick sympathy which leaps to the eyes, a smile here, a pressure of the hand there, and the knowledge (which others, unaware, cannot share) that there is something between them which may well be the foundation of a rare and precious friendship.

Philip Glenn and Xaver Ragaz took their time before realising the possibilities of their friendship—but when it came they found what is, perhaps, the best thing that life has to offer—friendship between man and man. (That sort of friendship, unhappily, is barred to women, be it with their own sex or the opposite). Philip Glenn and Xaver Ragaz met, parted, and then both having an inkling of what was happening to them arrange to spend a holiday together climbing the mountain wall. Two frightened men forgot their fear in friendship.

It is a sad book for men to read—in case they see what they may, perhaps, be missing. It is a sad book for women to read—in case they see what they will never, in all probability, be offered. But for both it is a fascinating book—delightfully written, very human and very simple.

No man could have written "His Imported Wife." It is full (too full by far) of what Stella did with the soup; what Stella would have liked to

make in the oven; how Stella burnt the toast (burning the toast, as a matter of fact, was her *pièce de résistance*). In fact, so much is there of housekeeping (an occupation that should be kept in the background and only mentioned in whispers or with bated breath) that it wearies one until "His Imported Wife" very nearly finds herself leaving the window en route for the dustbin.

The story only becomes interesting when it is showing a comparison between life in the English country house and life in Detroit and the Middle West. Ben Swift married Stella Vaughan-Hughes and she, poor girl, brought up with silver entrée dishes and political dinner parties and butlers and a maid to brush her hair had to acclimatise herself to (and at the same time clean out) a small apartment in Detroit. Naturally there were difficulties, but the continual burning of toast soon loses its fascination in a novel which rests more on situation than anything else. Stella pats herself on the back when all the trouble is over and she has to decide between living in England or going back to Detroit. In England she might once more have the silver entrée dish, but it is in Detroit, we are told, that she first caught a "glimpse of life." Needless to say she plunges for Detroit.

Mr. Dornford Yates still astounds me and after "Safe Custody" my astonishment knows no bounds. What sort of man is he that he should be able to picture these peerless people? Where does he find material for his matchless women and his manly men?

The plot, of course, is equally matchless and manly. A castle (and bigger and better than any other castle) at Carinthia in Austria; buried treasure (so big that when it was discovered these peerless people sealed it all up again for fear of flooding the market) in the castle; bold bad men breaking into the lovely castle to try and get the wonderful treasure away from the matchless woman and the manly men . . . But you probably know the story as well as I who have read it!

The matchless woman, by the way, wanted to stay in the castle with the manly men—but matchless women don't stay alone in castles with manly men without chaperones, so the manliest of the men married her at once, promising very faithfully not to take advantage of this curious state of affairs (wasn't it wonderful of him?). "The marriage," he stated, "shall be marriage in name only—because you are a peerless woman and I am a matchless man." I think I could forgive Mr. Dornford Yates his wonderful plot, but I cannot stomach manly men who never take advantage of peerless women; I have no use for men so brave and true that they never indulge in moments of cowardice or toy with despicable thoughts; I have no use for women who are always proud and beautiful and withal so tender. Does Mr. Dornford Yates mean it as an anodyne, or as an Utopia of the future, or is he simply laughing up his sleeve at them?

"Wine, Women and Waiters" is mostly concerned with women. The stories are entertaining, but the surprise ending at which Mr. Frankau is certainly an adept, becomes more than a little tedious.

A. A.

### A SAGE IN THE FOREST

*Men of the Trees.* By R. St. Barbe Baker. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.

**F**ORESTRY was Captain Baker's occupation in Africa: it was also his passion. The Sahara, he says, became a desert because invading Arabs felled its trees, and a hundred million goats destroyed whatever chance there might have been for its vegetation to recover. Elsewhere, he found nomads at the same destructive work, clearing the forest, farming the bare patches till the soil was exhausted, then clearing another area, and always leaving behind a trail of devastation. Some of them knew the value of trees, yet the idea of planting had not occurred to them. When Captain Baker spoke of it, they replied that it was God's business, and such an answer, with all that it implies of laziness reinforced with conviction, is daunting. None the less, he was equal to the occasion. Partly by reasoning, and partly by subtler methods, including a ceremonial dance, he brought the tribe to see that arboriculture was a matter in which God might be assisted. It must have been a proud moment for him when these people made a song for him, with "It is good to plant seeds in a box" as its refrain.

### *The Man Who Wanted Tennis*

Quite clearly, this forest officer's knowledge of trees would have been of small use if it had not been accompanied by sympathetic understanding of the Africans whom he made his coadjutors. During one period of absence, his labour of love was near to being nullified by another white man who uprooted a nursery in order to "hit rubber," or, as we should say, to make a court for playing tennis. Captain Baker does not seem to have practised for Wimbledon in the Kenya highlands, but he won the confidence of his black neighbours, and was even admitted into their brotherhood of the Kiama. Therein he learned the secret history of the country, and was given the African versions of the stories of the flood and Babel. Also, he was told how the coming of beneficent white men had of old been prophesied. It is noteworthy that among legends recorded in this book the idea persists of Equatorial Africa having once been a united Kingdom.

Other tales collected by the writer suggest man's primitive fellowship with beasts and birds, and he has seen the honeybird guiding the human being to bees' nests and being suitably rewarded with a feast of grubs. It is his opinion that we have had "too many Stanleys and too few Livingstones." There has been plenty of dash in exploration; not enough patience in observation. Captain Baker's book contains chapters solely for the reader interested in scientific forestry, but there is more for the anthropologist, and still more for every humanist.

### THE POET AND THE ENEMY

*The Orators.* An English Study. W. H. Auden. Faber. 7s. 6d.

**A** BOOK exciting and surprising; and also unique. Mr. Auden is an angry poet who has decided that the poet's place is not rounding off columns in weekly journals or shyly hobnobbing with Mr. Garvin, a page or two from his six-decker headlines. He finds no fun in being complacent or lazy-minded over the triumph of mediocrity in all sections of contemporary existence, in being a snail, drawing in horns from the naughty world and sliming a silver path through the cob-nut orchards of Kent or the dahlia-beds of Kensington Gardens. He attacks. In "The Orators" he is savage, but always with justification; violent, but always in control of his violence. The Enemy is individual (typical, that is) and collective, the whole contemporary situation, the insolence of mediocrity whether in the antics of Beethameer, bully of Britain, whose paper we meet

Nagging at our nostrils with its nasty news,  
Suckling the silly from a septic teat.

Leading the lost with lies to defeat;

or in the bland evasion of politicians, the smug uselessness of blind schoolmasters, the unchecked drug-traffic of the writers of fiction. He is the Airman (why attack the Enemy on its own dull mud-level?); and he invests his attack with the clear dream-horror of war, with stark destruction imagery. The delineation of enemy country is sharp and yet muddled like the field frame-work shown in an aerial eye-view or aerial photograph.

### *Vigour and Freshness*

Mr. Auden uses both prose and verse, but there is no strict separation between them. The prose is closely rhythmical and breaks easily into verse, in which he has often gone back beyond Middle to Old English for alliterative emphasis, a justified and excellent excursion. Both prose and verse are distinguished by the most extraordinary vigour, by a freshness of vocabulary (much of it stale words refreshed and much borrowings of technical terminology), by rhythms which are now Mr. Auden's absolute possession. For method and content, as a creation and as something new "The Orators," I believe, is a book of the first importance. It has the value of fiction without its looseness. Where other contemporary poets are fragmentary (excepting Mr. Eliot and one, or perhaps two, others), writing little poems each in scarcely connected equilibrium, where they are static, Mr. Auden has written dramatically. His writing (as in "Poems" of 1930) is eventful, full of act and gesture, without losing its fury of imagination and pressure. As others have pointed out, it was such dramatic quality that Donne brought into English poetry. Mr. Eliot has restored it in our day. Mr. Auden, who is more free as an inheritor of the difficult hammerings that Eliot had to do, is carrying dramatic writing further and (as it seems to me) to great purpose.

GEOFFREY GRIGSON.



### DESTROYED BY THE DEAN

*The Fear of Books.* By Holbrook Jackson, The Soncino Press. 21s.

THIS is different from the *Anatomy of Bibliomania* by the same author in that it has a theme underlying the tasty selection and savoury cooking of quotations and anecdotes. It tends to suggest that the censorship of books and even the destruction of licentious and evil ones is a mistake. Bibliophobia is the Aristotelian opposite of Bibliomania and we have some amusing headlines such as "Superstitious Sabotage," "The consequences of Fig Leaves" and "Literary Aphrodisiacs." There is an immense amount of bookish information, scraps of gossip, knowledge and history about books, most of which though carefully referenced gives the pleasant impression of being read for the first time. The list of burned MSS. such as Conington's *Diary* and Byron's *Memoirs* is a tragic loss, whereas printed books always rose like the Phoenix from their ashes. It is curious to find Dowden wishing Shelley's love letters burnt or Sir Philip Burne Jones burning the letters and inscriptions of Oscar Wilde or finally as a specimen of Mr. Jackson's judicial style: "Quite recently I find the Dean of St. Paul's bragging in an evening newspaper that he burnt the first two volumes of Havelock Ellis *Psychology of Sex*. I am not squeamish," he boasts, "but they were too unsavoury. These honourable Essays in the natural history of our species were nothing to him but pickled diseases. Good men are indeed dangerous in our books."

Censorship is impossible because of the inability of readers and critics to agree what books are really deleterious. We have an instance when the Vicar of Wakefield was thought so and Mark Rutherford was hushed from reading it to a Dorcas Meeting. Few read Milton's *Areopagitica*, but he pointed out that "if we think to regulate printing thereby to rectify manners, we must regulate all recreations and pastimes such as dancing and music and balladry and household gluttony and mixed conversation, and this is clearly impossible."

The case for or against the modern censorship appears in these pages with the most varied list of names in footnote. The conclusion is that "smut is dull of itself but it is made bright and seductive by prohibition." Of the English making such purchases abroad Mr. Jackson writes: "how these dupes of respectability will indulge in a debauch by proxy of a pornographic pamphlet and pay a pound for rubbish not worth a penny, whereas at home they will begrudge a florin for a masterpiece."

Nevertheless the subject has been well aired by English writers. "Coventry Patmore tells us that St. Augustine in the *City of God* and elsewhere says things fit to throw decent people into convulsions." Arthur Machen thought Zola's *Terre* should be in the hands of newly ordained priests in France and Henry James held *Madame Bovary* the pearl of Sunday reading. On the other hand Harriet Martineau was too disgusted to read *Vanity Fair*, *Jane Eyre*, *Adam Bede*, and Kingsley's *Hypatia* all caused forgotten storm of moral prudery in their

time. Agriculturalists will be amused or even shocked to learn that "the potato was impugned for erotic tendencies by the Elizabethans." There are interesting digressions on Aphrodisiacs, whether served in edible or readable form and on women readers. Though there have been great woman collectors, women are often the enemies of books and some pathetic cases are told of bibliophiles who have had to smuggle home their purchases.

The whole volume is a rich quilt in which patches purple and white, red or blue have been skilfully sewn together and the delighted reader is led to peruse a guide to literary taste under semblance of an Essay on the strange word Bibliophobia.

SHANE LESLIE.

### AN EVENING WITH SARAH

*Sarah and the Silver Screen.* By Edgar Jepson. Herbert Jenkins. 7s. 6d. net.

WHOEVER is afraid of shocking strangers with indecent laughter should beware of reading "Sarah and the Silver Screen" in a public place. Mr. Edgar Jepson has many bullseyes to his credit: Sarah's card is a "possible." Not for long has a more laughable book been written. Sarah is one continuous delight. As in the days of our fathers doctors prescribed "an evening at Toole's," so now I say to the melancholy or jaundiced: Take an evening with Sarah. Sarah is a *trouvaille*, one of those almost divine characters that make you chortle from the first and keep you in ecstasy to the all too early end.

The beauty of it is that Mr. Jepson, who is witty and skilful as well as droll, has taken a story worthy of, and perhaps emanating from, the lowest housemaid type of novel. For you must know that Sarah is a nursery governess in an aristocratic mansion in Mayfair, who is caught by the dowager peeress being kissed by the young lord, is dismissed, becomes a cinema star, gets a contract at Hollywood for £10,000 a year (as a beginning), and in the easily seen sequel will marry the said lord. What could be a more ideal tale for the housekeeper's room?

But Mr. Jepson's Sarah has a way with her. She does it all on the Moral Aphorisms of her Widowed Mother. She sees through herself just as Mr. Jepson sees through her story and the result is a joyous bit of fun poked at a number of Habits, Tastes and People, who respond royally to such treatment: especially at the great public's great love for the cinema and the Great Artists who minister to it and the beauties of Art. You will, if wise, be careful not to read the debate in the studio on the nature of a Whatnot or the conversation between Bill Woof, the famous Screen Director of the Resplendent Picture Corporation of Hollywood, and Mr. Sonnenschein, President of the same, concerning Sarah's engagement to star in "East is West," immediately after dinner, or you will choke. Few books leave us with the desire to tell the author: Please give us more. "Sarah and the Silver Screen" is one.

## A SOLDIER-ADMINISTRATOR

*General Sir John Maxwell.* By Sir George Arthur, Bt., M.V.O. John Murray. 15s. net.

NO one could be more competent than Sir George Arthur to write the life of this able soldier and administrator whose career extended from Tel-el-Kebir, through the Sudan, South Africa, to the Great War, the defence of the Suez Canal and the rebellion in Ireland. No one could have better discharged his task and not only Maxwell's family and comrades in arms, but the general reading public, who will here find a book of surpassing interest, are laid by Sir George Arthur under a real debt of gratitude.

John Maxwell's life was one of disciplined adventure. He was twenty-three when, as subaltern in the 42nd Highlanders, he took part in the night attack on Tel-el-Kebir, in which the whole Highland Brigade showed conspicuous gallantry; and but one year more when, promoted Captain and A.P.M., he was largely responsible for the policing of Cairo during a plague epidemic that cost 100,000 lives and drove the Egyptian doctors, trembling with fright, from the city, leaving the English to do their work.

### *An Amusing Letter*

This was the beginning of twelve years' Egyptology, training and campaigning. Maxwell became the new Sirdar—Kitchener's Assistant Military Secretary, commanded a brigade at Firket, at the Atbara, took an important part in the building of the railway, and led the centre of the British Army at the Battle of Omdurman. A letter home after this bloody affair is both amusing and interesting to read, and well shows the British officer's traditional generosity to his foe. "To put the fight into a nutshell," wrote Maxwell, "our fire of artillery, maxims, gunboats, and infantry was terrific and nothing could stand against it. I do not exaggerate in putting the Dervishes at 45,000; they marched beautifully, in excellent formation, and delivered a fine but hopeless attack. They were as brave as men could be, and had the Khalifa let us attack him I think we should still be outside Omdurman and many of us in no position to write home. Eddie Wortley had a show on the other bank; you will hear all about it and it will not lose in his recital. Winston Churchill is a ( ). I leave you to fill in the blank, but use brown paint."

### *Wingate's Luck*

Maxwell was appointed Military Governor of Omdurman, but had the mortification to see the succession to the Sirdarship pass into other hands, mainly through Wingate's luck in being on the spot for the final hunt and destruction of the Khalifa, which affords Sir George Arthur material for a thrilling chapter. But his old chief was not forgetful and Maxwell joined Kitchener in South Africa, was given the 14th Brigade, and became an extremely efficient Military Governor of Pretoria during the difficult days towards the end of the Boer War. A K.C.B. and appointment as Chief Staff Officer to the Duke of

Connaught in Ireland rewarded him; and the Duke writes a becoming preface to Sir George Arthur's biography. Next, six years as Commander-in-Chief in Egypt, and then came the Great War to give Maxwell his fullest opportunity and prove his steadfast character. For a short time chief liaison officer in France, Maxwell, with his special knowledge of Egypt, was soon bundled off by Kitchener to the near East, where he remained to 1916 doing work of capital importance though not spectacular, save for the repulse of the Turks on the Suez Canal. Sir George Arthur successfully defends Maxwell from the oft-repeated but ill-considered charge that he did not pursue his victory; he had virtually no water transport and but a few seasoned troops.

The necessity of finding a post for Sir Archibald Murray, relieved of his office of C.I.G.S., led to the recall of Maxwell at his own request. He was much annoyed, but the incident led to his appointment to the far more important office of G.O.C. in Ireland, where rebellion was in full swing. No one can doubt that in Ireland Maxwell did extremely well. His action was swift, successful, and restrained, and in the subsequent months he gave proof of remarkable fairmindedness in very difficult circumstances. Maxwell's last official work was on the Milner Mission to Egypt in 1918, during which there is evidence, says Sir George Arthur, "of his having strenuously urged that the fullest measure of generosity compatible with British security should be extended to Egyptian aspirations."

There is an idea about that a Big Bank is interested only in Big Business. Is that really the case? Surely, the wide variety of localities in which you can see branches of the Westminster Bank should alone be enough to dispel the notion. To all, a banking account supplies a background—a feeling of stability; and those who may have misgivings about opening one with 'so little' are invited to find that their hesitation may have been groundless

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### THE GREATEST FLORENTINE

*Leonardo Da Vinci.* Clifford Bax. Peter Davies. 5s.

**I**F to know is to love, Leonardo was a supreme lover. His was the greatest intellect of the Renaissance, and it is doubtful whether any subsequent individual has possessed such versatile genius. It was not enough for Leonardo to carry the art of painting to a point never before or since surpassed, but he must needs be an anatomist, engineer and inventor whose discoveries in these spheres are said to have heralded the modern scientific era.

Mr. Clifford Bax's book does not pretend to add anything to our knowledge of his life and achievements. They are now crystallised in the works of historians, critics, novelists and poets from Vasari to Mrs. Annand Taylor and Mr. McCurdy. The psycho-analysts have been as assiduous in dissecting the mind of Leonardo as he was himself in dissecting human bodies.

Mr. Bax, however, is to be congratulated on an admirable précis of the facts of Leonardo's life, concluding with an attempt to explain the mystery of his power. The author reveals the aristocrat always remote from the turmoil of society, the chicanery of politics, the bestiality of war and the sophistry of religion. His great contemporary fame rested on a mastery of painting that was akin to the miraculous. His faultless technique was a novelty at a time when the world could be excited by beautiful visions and those who could interpret them. And yet Leonardo apparently divined that expression in painting and sculpture had reached its zenith with him. How otherwise account for the fact that he devoted so much of his life to science?

#### *The Forerunner of Science*

Such, in brief, is Mr. Bax's theory. It has the merit of being feasible and is stated with charm and vivacity. Whether Leonardo "was straining desperately to get into the Twentieth Century and to witness the full triumph of the scientific and mechanical spirit which broke forth so brilliantly in the Renaissance," or not, we suspect that Mr. Bax, like a few other real poets, is looking back wistfully to the sixteenth.

If the greatest of the Florentines was really the Forerunner of science he has surely helped to create a world from which his aristocratic spirit would have recoiled. Mr. Bax's book contains many witty reflections on our times. Discussing the arts in general, he is of the opinion that they "belong to an earlier phase of human society, to a level of mind which is now becoming archaic," and "a mediocre engineer is a more advanced type than the best living poets or painters." But fortunately he admits that there will always be atavistic persons.

They may yet save us from the chauffeur mind and the tyranny of the machine.

ADRIAN BURY.

### AN AGE OF TRANSITION

*The Cambridge Mediæval History. Vol. VII. Decline of Empire and Papacy.* Cambridge University Press. 50s.

**I**T is too often the fate of undertakings such as this monumental history to record as they proceed the deaths of their pioneers. Professor Bury who planned the great history died as the work proceeded, and in the present volume the editors Dr. Previté-Orton and Dr. Z. N. Brooke, have to record the death of their senior colleague Dr. J. R. Tanner, and that of two of the principal contributors to the volume now published. But the work goes on, and, with but one more volume to be issued, promises to be the standard work on its subject for years to come.

It is the great merit of the history that for all its careful documentation and the elaborate correlation of its material—the bibliography alone is a considerable treatise—the narrative flows, and, particularly noticeable in the volume before us, the pageantry of the period survives the severest statement of fact. The volume covers the fourteenth century, a century of transition, when feudalism frittered away in chivalry and scholasticism, losing its grip in the mazes of its verbosity, began to give place unwittingly to the ideas of the modern world. One of the most striking of the subsidiary chapters is Mr. Arthur A. Tilley's discussion of the Early Renaissance in which it is noted how Humanism was already well on its way before the fourteenth century ended.

To attempt to deal fully with a work of over eight hundred pages would be idle. The most significant facts that emerge from the review of the century in Europe is the shifting of the centre of gravity from Central Europe to the West, where the rising nationalities of England, France and Spain, demonstrate the consolidating power of the national idea, the lack of which left Germany a congeries of particularist states and Italy a geographical and cultural expression. Our own history during the reigns of the three Edwards and Richard II. is vigorously related, though it maybe in a natural anxiety to warn us against the ascription of modern ideas to feudal thought, the value of Edward I's parliamentary and legal experiments is a little underestimated. Working as they may have been for purely personal interests, from purely selfish points of view, the English kings and magnates were in effect laying the foundations of modern England.

The story of France, in this period so intimately related to that England, is also brilliantly told, especially in the passages in which are described the relations of both countries with the Popes at Avignon, and the effect which the withdrawal of the Papacy from Rome had upon the rest of Europe. The Italian section with which the book opens is as vivid as was the tumultuous world it describes; indeed every section of the book has its peculiar merits. The incidental papers are as interesting as they are valuable, particularly admirable being those which deal with Wyclif, with the Jews in the Middle Ages, with Mediæval Estates and with Peasant life and Rural conditions.



## AN ENERGETIC AMATEUR

*The Poetical Works of Thomas Traherne.* Edited by Gladys I. Wade. Dobell. 7s. 6d.

**T**RAHERNE is interesting primarily as a mystic who recovered "by the highest reason" the divine felicity which he had possessed intuitively as a child. As a poet, he is the energetic, enthusiastic amateur, with an uncertain, faltering technique; but for all that his poems demanded re-editing. Studied as a whole (this applies at least to the "Poems of Felicity") they are valuable, if not as poetry, as a supplement to Traherne's prose and as one of the two vehicles of his mystic philosophy. His editor gives the poems as they appear in the MSS., printing the versions both of the Dobell Folio and the Burney MS. in the British Museum, and comparing them instructively for the changes (usually for the worse) made by Philip Traherne, Thomas's brother, who had prepared the Burney MS. for publication. She also adds six poems, not of his best, which she identifies for the first time as being by Traherne. They come from "A Collection of Meditations and Devotions," published in 1717, and convincing reasons are given for ascribing the prose and verse of the first part of this book ("Meditations on the Creation") to Traherne, as youthful work. The one mistake of this edition is to reprint Bertram Dobell's long introduction.

## ODD INFORMATION

*The Land of Timur.* By A. Polovtsoff. Methuen. 10s. 6d.

**T**HE general reader seeking odd pieces of information on remote corners of the world or on little-known history might turn over to his profit this interesting book which is competently produced by a former Russian diplomatic authority. Of all the old Russian provinces, that nearest to India, Turkestan, has most attraction for English minds. The fatal Tsarist policy of rivalry there created steady interest, and interest created the "incidents" of diplomatic history. It is, however, the peoples and their customs of which Mr. Polovtsoff writes. And anyone who cares to compare, as the Marquis Curzon used to, the life of the Pamir-Tadjiks with Indian frontier-tribes will see what changes absolute isolation over centuries effects. The author's style is simple, but the straightforward account of his visits to the province of Upper Oxus is most interestingly written. These are a nomad people, in a series of enclaves of their own, the children of Alexander and Ghenghiz Khan, remnants of century-old invasions, epitomes of the unchanging East.

## THE HISTORICITY OF THE BIBLE

*The Bible, the Scholar, and the Spade.* By C. H. Irwin. R.T.S. 7s. 6d.

**A**LTHOUGH at times a little naive and at others a little disingenuous in its interpretations, Dr. Irwin's summary of the discoveries of modern scholarship and excavation as they demonstrate the historicity of the Bible has a real historical value. Indeed, as a concise record of archaeological evidence to date the book may be commended to the general reader without reservation. On the scholarship side also it has its merit, though here the necessary compression makes anything like full representation impossible.

The weakness of the book is the very free way in which Dr. Irwin interprets the archaeological evidence. Hypothetic chronology is always a stumbling block, but, large as the margin of error undoubtedly is, contemporaneity must stand. He accepts Dr. Garstang's date for the Exodus as somewhere about 1500 B.C., but if, as some conjecture, the Hivites were Achaeans, then Joshua's invasion would not have been earlier than 1200 B.C. Moreover, Dr. Irwin calls Rameses II the Pharaoh of the oppression. In any case, however, there were probably two or more Israelitish settlements in Canaan. The world of Genesis is historical in many ways, and Judges we may be sure embalms history, but that they were both written long after the events described must inevitably be deduced from internal evidence.

England's Leading Monthly

THE  
NATIONAL  
REVIEW

No. 594

AUGUST, 1932

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## CORRESPONDENCE

### "Uncle Sam—Pay Up"

SIR,—In a recent issue you had a note under the caption "Uncle Sam—Pay Up." It is based upon a recent book by André Chéradame. You state that his thesis is that while Europe owes America for money borrowed, America owes Europe for the upkeep of men defending her on European soil in her absence. You further state that, when this method is applied, all the European Allies are cleared of debt to the U.S. except Great Britain.

I recommend that you look at Chéradame's book again. He figures that the U.S. should have had 2,084,000 men on the front almost from the start. He compares this with the actual number engaged in active combat. He multiplies the difference by the total cost per day of keeping an American soldier in France and thus arrives at the tiny figure of 5,842,000,000 dollars that the U.S. owes the Allies.

Then he goes on to a thesis which has been rather a favourite with French writers and which has been used more than once, not only in their arguments with America, but with some of their own Allies and some of their claims upon Germany—the gruesome one of counting corpses and fixing the monetary value of those men if they had been alive and not dead. He then figures that if the U.S. had had on the front the number of men he stipulates, 196,000 American soldiers would have been killed who are now alive. For this the U.S. owes the Allies the neat sum of dollars 1,697,000,000. Furthermore, he figures that if we had had at the front the number of soldiers he and his French military friends now say we should have had, we would have had 800,000 men wounded. M. Chéradame obliges by putting an estimate on the cost of the wounds they did not receive. So that, according to the Gospel of André, the U.S. owes the Allies another sum of dollars 1,916,000,000.

By this ingenious method of figure juggling he reaches the conclusion that, after subtracting their debts to the U.S., America really owes France 761,000,000 dollars, Italy 865,000,000 and Belgium 27,000,000. England does not come off so well. It still owes Uncle Sam one billion dollars.

All very nice for France and the lesser Allies. But not so nice for England. Leaving out of the question the much-debated thesis of how much America contributed to the final winning of the war, there is no doubt but that England saved France in the early years with her armies and by keeping watch and ward on the seas. But when M. Chéradame began counting corpses, he was not interested in England. He was more concerned about France. Even so, he was far too modest. He did not figure the damage American troops did by digging trenches on French farms. He did not estimate the cost of the free drinks of water they got. He did not figure the damage American gunners did to French cities, towns and hamlets in the Argonne when they were shelling

the Germans out. He did not estimate the value of the French farm crops which were trodden down by American troops on the move, nor the value of the French forests, which were ruined by high explosives. So that it gets down to this: M. Chéradame has been far too lenient. He could easily have proved that America, by coming into the war, should be in financial bondage to his country for generations to come.

MILTON BRONNER.

### Plays and Players.

SIR,—We lament the doldrums of the stage, the dearth of good plays, the absence of great acting. Your critics and other critics are for ever complaining, and the public stay away from the theatre. It cannot be wholly "the pictures" which keep them away, for the films of to-day incur an equal hostility. It cannot be wholly bad times, for in moments of depression mankind turns to the theatre for a passing illusion of contentment, and pleasures are the last sacrifice of all.

Is it unreasonable to believe that these things are due to the ignorant stupidity of those who control the modern theatre and the film and to the lazy cupidity of those who act? Our players cannot articulate distinctly and have no real grounding in their art. Yet, as the courts prove from time to time, they receive absurdly large salaries. The people in control scarcely profess a taste for literature or dramatic art, and even their sense of what is called "good theatre" is cross-eyed and limited.

Of course, theatres are empty and films pernicious.

Westminster.

G. CAMERON.

### Service or Sermon?

SIR,—Allow me to make a short comment on the Argument which appeared in your columns. It seems to me that neither of the very brilliant antagonists knows why one goes to church at all! Of course, the Service *must* be more important than the Sermon, if the fact that it is a perpetual memory of the "full perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world" be realised. We all like a good sermon and a beautiful service, but the gist of the matter is that we go to the House of God to give ourselves to Him and because we believe that there He is with us, the Fountain of all Grace, in a very special way, and that an elaborate service and a good sermon are more in accord with His honour than a poor service and a dull sermon. The essential is the Sacrifice of the Altar and that if that is there, the rest is just by the way.

A CHURCHWOMAN.

### What Makes a Summer?

SIR,—Is this a good summer? If we have no return of fine warm weather will it be counted as a good summer? All things are relative and, after the first week of June, we had at least five weeks of perfect weather. And there is no month in all the world to be compared with a good English June. A good summer, I think, whatever now befall.

Hampshire.

L. BAKER.

### "The Morals of Stiffkey"

SIR,—I wholly agree with every word written by "Saturday Reviewer" about the very unsavoury Stiffkey Case. Fortunately, more engrossing events have forcibly consigned it to the lumber-room of past events. The one point, however, which has not been touched upon, is, that the incumbent of this unfortunate parish appears to have imagined that he had "a roving commission" here, there and everywhere, and to have used the emolument of this parish for the furtherance of this work.

Burgess Hill.

J. P. BACON PHILLIPS.

### The Properest Day

SIR,—The obvious purpose of the *Saturday Review*—as its name implies—is to consider, estimate and pronounce opinions concerning the events of the current week. In order to do this effectively the end of each week seems to be the precise time for doing it.

In view of the *Saturday's* long record it must possess a large number of Provincial readers; to such people it supplies a discriminating judgment for their leisurely contemplation at the week-end.

HENRY DÜKE.

Port Soderick, Isle of Man.

### Goodwill

SIR,—Pray permit me to join in the chorus of praise for the new issue of the *Saturday Review*, and wish it success under the new management.

During a long residence in South Africa, I have realised that the journal goes a long way towards keeping one sane, i.e., it gives its readers, a sane view (in these troublous times) of many things which would seem to be prompted by craziness, if not insanity.

W. M. SCHOFIELD.

Port Elizabeth, S.A.

### And Good Manners

SIR,—I have always looked upon the *Saturday Review* as a sound and patriotic paper, and hitherto have read it with interest and enjoyment; but in your issues of the 9th and 16th I was not only disappointed, but disgusted, at the strange and disturbing change of tone shown in the early paragraphs of "Notes of the Week." These are not only subversive in their attempt to ridicule the actions of the Government in their endeavours to right the tangled affairs of the world, but they are extremely vulgar in tone and expression, contain no fair nor reasonable criticism, and are a blot upon the standard of respectable and responsible journalism.

That a journal of the prestige and standing of the *Saturday Review* should adopt, quite suddenly, such a policy and permit such a deterioration in good taste and manners is very objectionable and a serious shock.

A. D. CHANTER.

Sunny Hill, Bourne End, Bucks.

[We are grateful for this lesson in manners and example of perfect taste.—ED., S.R.]

### Tinkling Cymbals.

SIR,—Your criticism of the B.B.C. emboldens me to ask a question: "Why during the summer months do the programmes of the English stations fall so conspicuously below standard?" In the winter months it does not matter very much what they provide as the listener even if he has only a modest set can tune in to some foreign station and enjoy good music. In summer time his power of reaching foreign stations is much curtailed and the way the B.B.C. has of broadcasting entertainments which depend on everything but sound for their effect is forcibly brought home to him.

AUDITOR TANTUM.

## Books of the Week

### LITERARY EDITOR'S REVIEW

*The Land of the New Adventure*, by William Inglis Morse. Quaritch. £2 15s. An exhaustive and well-edited survey of the Georgian era in Nova Scotia.

*Selwyn Image Letters*, edited by A. H. Mackmurdo. Grant Richards. 10s. 6d. Professor Image wrote delightful letters which are now given to the public in this volume.

*Superficial Journey Through Tokio and Peking*, by Peter Quennell. Faber. 12s. 6d. A pleasantly written book of impressions of Japan and China.

*Queen Elizabeth*, by Mona Wilson. P. Davies. 5s.

*Ruskin*, by David Larg. P. Davies. 5s. Two more biographies in Peter Davies' excellent series.

*All Experience*, by Ethel Mannin. Jarrolds. 10s. 6d. Ethel Mannin's impressions (and a few more confessions) of her wanderings at home and abroad.

*Climate*, by C. E. P. Brooks, D.Sc. Benn. 10s. 6d. A summary statement of climatic conditions in various parts of the world. An excellent guide and an equally excellent reference book.

*New Health for Everyman*, by Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane. Bles. 5s. The well-being of the "man in the street." A challenge, too, of current views on the causes of cancer, birth control, alcohol, illegitimacy, and sex hygiene.

### NOVELS RECEIVED

*Aria and Finale*, by James Hanley. Boriswood. 5s. Three grim stories of the sea.

*As the Rose*, by W. J. Grant. Ingpen & Grant. 7s. 6d.

*The Coloured Dome*, by Francis Stuart. Gollancz. 7s. 6d. An Irish story.

*Somehow Lengthened*, by Alice Cobbett. Benn. 7s. 6d.



## CITY

*Lombard Street, Thursday.*

Attention in the Stock Exchange this week has been concentrated, mainly, on War Loan conversions. The usual eleventh-hour rush to get belated applications through before the end of the month in order to obtain the 1 per cent. bonus has put an extra strain on the Stock Exchange, the Bank of England, the Joint Stock banks and the Post Office. All have risen to the occasion and it may be said without undue elation that thanks to their united efforts one of the biggest financial operations in modern history has been successfully accomplished with extraordinary promptitude and facility.

In paying tribute to these institutions one must not overlook the investing public whose patriotism and self-sacrifice have so largely contributed to the successful carrying out of this colossal scheme. It is rightly regarded as a triumph of British finance and should go far in restoring confidence in our National finances and may prove to be the starting point to a return of world prosperity.

### New Savings Certificates

The fourth series of National Saving Certificates will be on sale as from Tuesday next. The wisdom of putting at least a portion of one's savings into these Certificates has been proved by the success of former issues and it may be safely predicted that the new series will be as popular with investors as the old.

With the all-round drop in money values, National Saving Certificates cannot be expected to give as good a return as formerly. The third issue, which was withdrawn at the start of the War Loan Conversion offer, gave a yield of £4 2s. 9d. per cent. On the new basis the yield works out at £3 7s. 1d. per cent, per annum if the Certificates are held for the full period of 11 years. This, it should be noted, is free of income tax and is as good a return as can reasonably be expected especially having regard to the safety of the investment.

### Available for Trustees

The task of obtaining trustee investments to yield much, if anything, over 3½ per cent. becomes increasingly difficult. The rise in British Government securities has been universal and if one turns to the market for Home Railway prior charge issues the result is very much the same. There are, however, still one or two in this section that, for no particular reason, have lagged behind the others.

A case in point is the 5 per cent. Redeemable Debenture stock (1957-1962) of the Metropolitan Railway. A parcel of this stock is available at the moment at 112½, free of stamp, at which a yield of £4 2s. 6d. is obtainable if allowance is made for redemption.

A small amount is also to be had of City & South

London 5 per cent. 1891 Preference stock at 103½. This returns the investor £4 17s. 6d. per cent. Both are eligible for trustees and are well secured as to principal and interest.

### Crosse and Blackwell.

Losses in overseas markets have been a severe drain on the resources of Crosse and Blackwell, Ltd., during the past year. The home business has been more satisfactory, resulting in a profit of £12,369; but against this has to be set a debit of no less than £122,781 required to cover losses on the Company's businesses abroad and payments under guarantee. It will, however, be some consolation to the shareholders to learn that the accounts for the year have borne a substantial amount of non-recurring charges and that a vigorous policy of retrenchment and reduction in expenditure has been carried out in all the home companies. Moreover, important changes in overseas interests are outlined in the report which put the relations with the companies trading abroad on a better basis. As these transactions have been completed since the closing of the 1931 accounts the directors look for a substantial improvement in the trading results of the Company in the current year.

### COMPANY MEETING

## THRELFALL'S BREWERY CO. LTD.

The forty-fifth annual general meeting of Threlfall's Brewery Co. Ltd. was held on Wednesday at Southern House, Cannon Street, E.C. Major CHARLES MORRIS THRELFALL (the chairman) presided.

The Chairman, in moving the adoption of the report and accounts, said: You will appreciate that the year under review has been a particularly anxious and exceptional one, and, by reason of circumstances which have been beyond our control, your board have to report a considerable decrease in profits. At this time last year your company was bearing the additional taxation of 3s. per barrel levied in the Budget of 1930. On the introduction of the supplementary Budget in September last the beer duty was increased by 31s. per standard barrel. The result of such increase is that beer is now subject to a duty exceeding fourteen times its pre-war figure of 7s. 9d. per barrel.

It was anticipated that the consequent increase in price would have results far-reaching and injurious, and, unfortunately, these fears have been amply fulfilled. Much resentment has been expressed by consumers of beer at the unjust share of taxation which they have to pay in comparison with consumers of other beverages, and this additional burden is the more unfortunate as by the general depreciation of capital and profits in this and all allied trades, coupled with loss to farmers and others in almost every walk of life, it must mean but little financial gain to the Government.

The difficult conditions against which your board have had to contend in recent years have been intensified, and the imposition of this excessive taxation, in conjunction with other factors which had been steadily exercising their influence upon the sales of the company, has accelerated the decrease in our profits very considerably. Taxation to cover national extravagance is reflected in our figures to-day, and is largely the cause of the crowds that walk the streets without hope of work.

Your directors have continued their policy of maintaining and modernising the company's licensed premises, and I am glad to say that during the past year we have been successful in obtaining the approval of the licensing justices to erect three new hotels. (Hear, hear.) The gross profit is £344,244. There is a net profit of £257,922 13s. 11d. for the year, which, together with the carry forward, makes a total of £604,153 to be dealt with. It is proposed to pay a final dividend at the rate of 16 per cent. for the half-year, making 17 per cent. for the year, and to carry forward £343,885.

Mr. G. M. GALLOWAY (managing director) seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

## Literary

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## The "Saturday Review" Suggests This Week :

[We hope that this page will keep our readers in touch with the best of the Theatre, Film, and Wireless programmes, of the week.—Ed.]

### Next Week's Broadcasting

*July 31st, 8 p.m. (National).* The Drumhead Service from Castle Park, Colchester, is easily the most important broadcast on Sunday. The address is by the Rt. Reverend the Lord Bishop of Chelmsford, and the singing will be accompanied by the Massed Bands of the Colchester Garrison.

*August 1st, 3 p.m. (National).* Those who remember the magnificent broadcasts from the Menin Gate will want to listen to the Unveiling of the Somme Memorial, Thiepval, by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, K.G. The President of the French Republic will deliver an address, and the ceremony is an impressive one. The Outside Broadcast Director can be relied upon to make it the outstanding broadcast of the week.

*August 1st, 7.30 p.m. (National).* An excellent Vaudeville programme, though why it takes place so early in the evening passes comprehension.

*August 2nd, 9.20 p.m. (National), and August 3rd, 9 p.m. (Regional).* "To See Ourselves," a Domestic Comedy by E. M. Delafield. This play was extremely successful on the occasion of its first broadcast. It is to be

hoped that it will be free from the appalling mis-casting which marred the performance of "The Round Table" last week.

*August 3rd, 9.35 p.m. (National).* "Miscellany, No. 4." The previous programmes in this series have been so uneven that it is impossible to predict whether this one will be worth listening to. Up to now the producers have been so anxious to be "different" that the programmes have suffered from over-elaboration.

*August 4th, 2 p.m. (National).* The Outside Broadcast Director once more tops the bill, this time with the ceremony of Chairing the Band and Presidential Address by the Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George, O.M., M.P., at the Royal National Eistedfodd.

*August 6th—8.9.30 p.m. and 9.50-10.30 p.m. (National).* The First Promenade Concert of the 38th season will be relayed from Queen's Hall. Those who cannot actually get to the Queen's Hall should make a point of listening at home.

A very uneven week, with all the best programmes coming from outside the studio.

### Theatres and Films

#### Theatres

*Escape.* By John Galsworthy. 8.40 Wed. and Sat., 2.40. Matt Denant, strolling through Hyde Park, is provoked to manslaughter a policeman who is persecuting an inoffensive prostitute in the normal course of his duties. One year later, he escapes from Dartmoor—after which the play consists of episodes showing the psychological reactions of various persons he encounters during his flight from justice. As the play is by Galsworthy, it is not surprising that these are strongly influenced, especially in the cases of the women, by the fact that the escaping convict is a gentleman. That, indeed, is the principal "argument" of the play.

Unfortunately, it is confused by the peculiar circumstances of Denant's case. Not only was the manslaughter an accident; but his attack on the detective was heroic, rather than culpable. The play would have been more interesting, had the case been less exceptional. Dramatically, the story is a hunt; and the author has endeavoured to convey this by relating it in a series of swiftly-changing scenes. But what the cinema can do, the theatre cannot; the inevitable interval between each scene is fatal to the continuity, and consequently to the excitement. However,

"Escape" is very well worth seeing. My own feeling on leaving the theatre was of having passed the evening in the company of highly intelligent and interesting persons who had not, unfortunately, on this occasion been quite at the tip-top of their form. It is very well acted, especially by Colin Clive as the escaping convict. *Garrick.*

#### Films

*Jack's the Boy.* A good rollicking farce with music. Jack Hulbert and Cicely Courtneidge. *Tivoli.*

*One Hour With You.* Not very good Lubitsch, but amusing and light. Maurice Chevalier and Jeanette MacDonald. *Carlton.*

*Hell's Divers.* Contains plenty of thrills. Wallace Beery and Clark Gable. *Marble Arch Pavilion.*

*Shanghai Express.* Revival of this good melodrama, with Marlene Dietrich, directed by Mr. von Sternberg. *New Victoria.*

*Der Hauptmann von Köpenick.* Based on the famous hoax. A very good picture, indeed. German dialogue with English sub-titles. *Cambridge.*

*Mutter Krausen.* An interesting, but depressing, German silent picture. *Academy.*

#### General Releases

Nothing of any importance.